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OLD DRURY LANE.

OLD DRURY LANE

FIFTY YEARS' RECOLLECTIONS

OF

AUTHOR, ACTOR, AND MANAGER

BY

EDWARD STIRLING

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

London
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY
1881

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OLD DRURY LANE.

BOOK I.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE AUTHOR FROM SCHOOL-DAYS TO THE PRESENT TIME.

CHAPTER I.

The Author's birthplace—School-days at Southwark—Southwark Fair—Samuel Pepys' account—Bullock's Booth—Original Bill of 1728—Fielding and Reynolds's Great Theatrical Booth—The Author's first appearance on the Stage—Samuel Phelps—The 'Temple of Arts' in Catherine-street—'Tom and Jerry'—The 'Brown Bear,' and its landlord, Ikey Solomons—'A New Way to Pay Old Debts.'

I WAS born at Thame in Oxfordshire in the year 1807, and received my education at Queen Elizabeth's Latin School, Southwark, the ancient Southwark of our Saxon forefathers, a famous place for hostelries and inns—the old 'Tabard' of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales and Sam Weller's quarters, the 'White Hart' Inn, ranking first in the affection and regard of lovers of the

olden time. Here was held annually the famous fair so graphically described by Mr. Samuel Pepys in his Diary, and once resorted to by Court and City. Charles II. and a bevy of royal favourites shared in the fun and merriment of this popular fair. Theatrical booths filled a prominent place in the festivities: first among the number was

BULLOCK'S* BOOTH,

of which the following is an *Original Bill*, bearing date 1728:

'During the time of Southwark Fair will be held, and presented an excellent Droll, called

'"THE PERJURED PRINCE,

Or the Martyred General,"

with the humours of Squire Calveshead, his Mother and Sister Hoyden, and his man Aminadab. The part of the

* Bullock was an actor at the King's Theatre.

'SQUIRE, *Mr. Bullock;*
HOYDEN, by *Mrs. Willis;*

and all the parts by persons from the Theatre in Drury Lane, with several entertainments of Singing and Dancing, particularly the Fingall Dance by Mr. Smith and Mrs. Ogden.

'N.B. The clothes are entirely new as well as the Scenes, which are painted in an excellent manner by an Artist.'

'*At* FIELDING AND REYNOLDS'S
GREAT THEATRICAL BOOTH,

in the *Talbot Inn Yard,** by the Company of Comedians from the new Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, during the time of the Fair, will be performed at Twelve o'Clock

'"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA."

All the songs and dances, set to music, as

* Chaucer's 'Tabard.'

performed at the Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields.'—*The Daily Post*, August, 1728.

My first advent on the stage, though it could hardly be called a public one, was at the mature age of fourteen, in the year 1821, at a small Thespian Temple in Rawstorne-street, Goswell-road. The late Samuel Phelps was one of the amateur actors in our motley troupe. We paid to act. Prices ran high for Shakesperian heroes. Thirty shillings enabled the fortunate possessor to strut and fret his hour as Othello or Macbeth. Fifteen shillings was the price paid for the Thane of Fife. Malcolm went at seven; Lady Macbeth fetched high prices, according to the ladies' purses. Edward Fitz-Ball's then popular drama, 'The Innkeeper of Abbeville,' being selected for representation, I paid seventeen good shillings for the privilege

of enacting an innocent ostler, wrongfully accused of murder (Ozzrand). Unfortunately the piece was never destined to reach its conclusion, our curtain dropping at one in the morning on the first act, not to rise upon the second; cutting me out of a desperate combat with the real murderer, Dyrkile, and a sensational death in a virtuous cause. The manager vouchsafed but a surly and cynical reply to my remonstrances at thus being deprived of dying:

'Stuff! the lamps are going out—who's to see a chap die in the dark?'

This was unanswerable. Nothing appeased, however, I tried another stage, the 'Temple of Arts' (now the *Echo* Office) in Catherine-street, Strand. Here economy ruled; the market was cheaper, and prices much lower in the dramatic scale. For eight shillings I purchased an old man (Waldemar in 'William Tell') and Tommy (low comedy) in 'All at Coventry.' At the

conclusion of our performances, kindly Smithson, the manager, patted me on the shoulder, saying :

'You'll do better, my boy, next time; try tragedy—you shall have a "cock of the walk" for a pound — Octavian in the "Mountaineers."'

My finances, however, never reached such an eminence as a 'cock of the walk.' I played the Hon. Dick Trifle in the then great attraction of the day, 'Tom and Jerry,' dramatised from Pierce Egan's 'Life in London,' and first produced at Astley's in an equestrian shape with real horses, donkeys, etc. The renowned pugilists, Tom Cribb and Spring, boxed in the circle. Tyrone Power (an unrivalled Irish comedian) was the original Corinthian Tom. This extraordinary piece made the fortunes of half the managers in England : for three successive seasons it kept the Adelphi stage with houses

crowded nightly. A fine cast helped it greatly: Corinthian Tom, Wrench; Jerry, Burroughs; Logic, Wilkinson; Jemmy Green, Keeley; Trifle, Bellamy; Dusty Bob, Walbourn; Sue, Mrs. Waylett; Kate, Miss Scott; African Sal, Saunders; etc.

The 'Brown Bear' in Goodman's Fields next opened its claws to grasp my slender means. A Jew, one Ikey Solomons (lineally descended from Shylock), the landlord of the 'Bear,' fitted up a dirty club-room with a few paltry scenes, and a ragged green baize curtain, and illuminated the floor with half-a-dozen oil-lamps. This Ikey called a '*The-a-tar* to *hact* in,' that is, if you could pay. Lord Lovell in 'A New Way to Pay Old Debts' cost me two-and-sixpence, dress included. This at night, to my horror, I found to consist of my own frock-coat, russet boots, a torn scarf, and a bearskin grenadier's cap. It is said that dress makes the man, but it never made a 'lord' like this.

Ikey's room was filled with an uproarious assemblage: sailors and their female friends, Jews, lascars, workmen with their wives and families; pots of beer and 'goes' of gin, tobacco and pipes were in constant request, and went the round of the company to any amount, whilst Ikey Solomon's voice was always in the ascendant, crying out 'Give yer orders,' and scolding his waiters, Moses and Aaron. I need not say our efforts on the stage could not be heard without some difficulty and under considerable disadvantage amid this universal din. Just at the critical moment when Lady Allworth, the rich widow, cries out as wicked Sir Giles Overreach draws his sword, and the audience are worked up to agony-point, Ikey bawled out in a tone more of sorrow than of anger, 'Aaron, there's that 'ere sailor, and a go of rum, a-bolting without paying. Stan' afore the door.' Not another syllable was heard;

the ragged baize dropped amidst yells of laughter, and cries of 'Go it, Ikey.' No more Brown, Black or White Bears for my money, depend upon it, reader, after this escapade!

CHAPTER II.

Bartholomew Fair—Crawley's Booth—Lee and Harper's Great Theatrical Booth—'The Beggar's Opera'—Fun of the Fair in 1822—Richardson's Show—Gyngell the great Conjuror—Jack Saunders—Wombwell's Menagerie—Richardson's Theatre—'The Tyrant of the Eagle Castle on the Rhine'—A Norfolk Giant—Little Miss Biffin—A Real Mermaid—A Smithfield Ball.

My next venture was at Bartlemy Fair, the cockney saturnalia of high and low degree. Gentle and simple flocked alike to worship at old St. Bartlemy's shrine.

'Come, bustle, neighbour Sprig,
Buckle on your hat and wig,
In our Sunday clothes so gaily,
Let us strut up the Old Bailey.
O! the Devil take the rain!
We may never go again;
See, the shows have begun:—oh, rare oh!'

Old Song.

This renowned fair had been held for many centuries, by royal grant from Henry I. It was always inaugurated with civic pomp and pageantry. In old Rowley's days of general revelry puppet-plays held high place in public estimation. Court, city, and mob went hand-in-hand to old Bartlemy's festival—Jack was as good as his master. The following is one of the old bills of a century and a half ago :

'CRAWLEY'S BOOTH,

Over against the "Crown," in Smithfield. During the Fair-time of St. Bartholomew, will be presented a little Opera, called

'"THE OLD CREATION OF THE WORLD,"

yet newly revived, with the addition of

'NOAH'S ARK.

Also several Fountains playing real Water during the time of the Play.

'The last scene does present Noah and

his Family coming out of the Ark; with all the beasts, two by two; and all the fowls of the air, seen in a prospect, sitting upon the trees. Likewise, over the Ark is seen the Sun rising in a most glorious manner; moreover, a multitude of Angels will be seen in a double rank, which presents a double prospect, one for the Sun, the other for a Palace, where will be seen six Angels ringing six bells. Likewise machines descend from above, double and trible, with Dives rising out of Hell, and Lazarus seen in Abraham's bosom, besides several figures dancing jigs, sarabands, and country dances likewise, to the admiration of all spectators, with the merry conceits of Squire Punch and Sir John Spendall.'—*Daily Post*, 1728.

'At Lee and Harper's
Great Theatrical Booth,

over against the Hospital Gate, in West Smithfield during the Fair of St. Bar-

tholomew, will be presented that celebrated entertainment, called

'"HERO AND LEANDER,"

with all the proper decorations of scenery and machinery, particularly the sea, Leander and Hero, Tritons, Neptune and Mermaids, with comical humours of Otter and Nurse, and several entertainments called "Leander and Hero." Singing and dancing performed by persons from both Theatres, beginning at ten in the morning and continuing playing till three in the afternoon and no longer, because of the vast concourse of people which crowd to see

'"THE QUAKER'S OPERA,

Or the Escape of Jack Sheppard,"

will begin at four o'clock in the afternoon, and continue the remaining part of the evening, and any person may come before

the last show, not to be crowded, by paying more.'

'At Fielding and Reynolds's

Great Theatrical Booth,

in the George Inn Yard, in Smithfield, by the Company of Comedians from the New Theatre in the Haymarket, during the Fair, will be represented

'"The Beggar's Opera."

All the songs and dances set to music, as performed at the Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. N.B. The clothes are chiefly new, as well as the scenes, which are painted by excellent artists, and approved of and commended by the best masters.

'The Noted Yeates

and the famous Posture makers is at the

'Great Booth

in Smithfield Pound, facing the end of Cow Lane, where during the Fair-time will be

presented that most entertaining play called

'"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA,"

wherein is shown the vile practice of Peachum and his wife, and the out-of-the-way management of their crew, the pleasant and melancholy strains of Polly Peachum and Lucy Locket; the merry and half-tragic flights of Captain Macheath, with the humorous dialogue between the Captain and his Seraglio of dainty Doxies—and his parting with his dearly beloved Lucy, also the passages between the honest gaol-keeper, Locket, and his daughter, almost all the songs by men and women; likewise his famous two posture-masters, who perform such surprising postures, that they are really esteemed the wonder of the world and age. Concluding with a curious representation of his Sacred Majesty, and the present most illustrious House of Lords as sitting in Parliament, with curious

machinery representing it. Begin at 10 in the morning, ending at 10 at night.'

FUN OF THE FAIR IN 1822.

'All is flurry, hurry, skurry,
Girls squalling, show-men bawling,
Cats throwing, trumpets blowing,
Rattles springing, monkeys grinning,
Rope-dancing, horses prancing,
Slack wire, eating fire,
Funny clowns, ups and downs,
Round about, all out,
Just in time, that's prime.'

Old Song.

Prominent amidst the glories of the fair, stood

'MUSTER' RICHARDSON'S

GREAT THEATRICAL SHOW,

the largest itinerant theatre in England, and both within and without the best. Country fairs, statute and pleasure, were important matters in the days of our grandsires.

'Bartlemy' was always the 'Ultima

Thule' of all wandering show-folk. Muster Richardson's establishment stood boldly out, defying competition—in proportion gigantic—superb in drapery, illumination, lamps, fat-pots, and glitter! add to these brass bands, gongs—and to these Chinese lanterns, and grandly-dressed performers. Tragedy inside, real ghosts, blue fire. Outside comedy: rollicking fun; awful combats; columbines; harlequins and clowns. At night all this grandeur was multiplied tenfold. Tinsel tells always better by lamplight. The momentous gong sounds, and juvenile hearts beat, as they rush up the broad steps, to pay only sixpence—reserved seats, one shilling. What excitement, pushing and crushing to pay first! one scarcely knew how best to invest money; there was so much to see in the fair. Pig-faced ladies eating out of solid silver bowls (so we were told); a two-headed calf; giants and dwarfs by scores;

strings of sausages all hot, six for a penny; savage Indians from Timbuctoo; horses that could play a game at cards; conjurors; scratch-cradles; gingerbread-nuts; rows of inviting stalls for eating, drinking, toys, cakes, and merriment; sheep-pens fitted up *al fresco;* oysters, real substantial oysters, large as cheese-plates, with a good strong flavour of long absence from their marine abode, stifled by copious doses of vinegar and pepper. Mutton-pies reeking hot, only a penny. On market-days the drovers, their dogs and bewildered cattle, rushed about like mad, upsetting stalls, men, women, and children, creating a scene of confusion and fright scarcely conceivable; a very Babel of voices, loud swearing, screams, prayers, butchers yelling, dogs yelping. Frequently rain and shoals of mud added not a little to the joy of the rude boys, of whom there was always a legion.

'When the fair is at the full,
In gallops a mad bull,
Puts the rabble to the rout.'

'Mad Bull!' became a watch-word with wicked urchins bent on mischief.

Dancing was a leading feature of the fair. Every conceivable nook and corner was converted into an 'assembly-room,' enlivened with a few tallow-candles and mostly a drunken fiddler. The price of admission to these primitive 'Argyle Rooms' was generally most modest—ranging from twopence to a shilling, with a penny to the fiddler.

Magic and legerdemain held its own amidst its many rivals. Monsieur Gyngell, emperor of cards, arch-shuffler, wizard-like, held his pack, cutting, dealing, shifting in his delicate hands sparkling with diamonds (as we thought them, but which were cut glass in reality). With what a courtly air did Monsieur request the loan of a hat,

merely to boil a pudding in! Sometimes, in dulcet tones, he would entice a shilling or half-crown from a fair lady's purse to be cut in half by his mighty magic, and then to be reunited before our very eyes. Incomparable Gyngell! why, if you talk of attire, neither Worth nor Poole ever dreamt of so much elegance. Real ostrich feathers, three in a jewelled cap—three! like a Prince of Wales; silk and satin dress, spangles, lace, pink legs, milk-white face, with a touch of rose-colour; smile bewitching, voice enchanting. He never asked for money, it flowed into the ample pockets of his silken jerkin willy-nilly; such were the necromancer's powers of persuasion over juvenile hoards and savings.

'HIGH METALLED RACERS. JACK SAUNDERS'S EQUESTRIAN "TALLY HO!" CIRCUS.

Cream-coloured steeds, with pink eyes; just arrived from the King's own stable,

lent to his friend Jack Saunders for that day only by his Majesty.'

Here was an announcement calculated to draw the sightseers. Jack's booth filled nightly, and his pockets filled too. Clever Jack had a spice of the hunting squire, after his rough fashion. His scarlet coat, buckskin-breeches, top-boots, spurs, white cravat and white hat; add to this a long whip, a snatch of a song, 'Tantivy ho! A hunting we will go,' formed to us simple beholders a picture of the chase—a Nimrod, a squire of high degree, 'decked out' in his Sunday clothes. The whip that he used to whip them out and in at each performance, at times operated on enterprising youths short of cash, who were trying to cut holes in Jack's canvas walls to see the bare-backed riders for nothing. Alas! whack, whack! came the whip and the burden of his song, 'Tantivy, Tally ho!' on the ears and backs of the non-payers.

FIRE-EATING appeared to be a favourite sport, supplemented with sword-swallowing. Gambling stalked rife abroad day and night; thimbles and peas, prick in the garter, black cock and white cock, etc., lured the unwary to their ruin.

NATURAL HISTORY was well represented by *Wombwell's Royal Menagerie*, a perfect travelling Zoological Institution, at once instructive and amusing. Long lines of yellow-painted caravans carried the captive kings and queens of the forest and jungle, collected from every quarter of the globe, to be exhibited for sixpence. A brass beef-eater's band into the bargain, outside in scarlet and gold; oil paintings, gems of art and nature, hung before, behind, and on every side, a real Royal National Gallery gratis. The artists employed by Wombwell were left entirely to their own imagination, no narrow rules or art dogmas

fettered or cramped the free play of their ideas or brushes. Boa-constrictors swallowed negro families wholesale; Bengal tigers ate up British officers and natives for luncheon; lions seemed to devour everything and everybody. Such is the power of art skilfully developed. Inside, beautifully framed in royal purple and gold, hung a statement that his 'Majesty had received Wombwell and his happy family in the court-yard at Windsor Castle, by Royal Command.' In fact, most of the crowned heads, European and Eastern potentates, including Hokey-pokey, King of the Cannibal Islands, had been on visiting terms with 'Nero' the lion, his wife and cubs. Such honours might well fill all the yellow caravans to overflowing.

To enjoy *Richardson's Theatre*, there was nothing like torch-light. There was no gas then. The dresses and features of 'Muster' Richardson's actors came out

more strikingly by oil-light. What a marvellous parade it was! What fairy forms and chivalric knights, ghosts, goblins, clowns and dwarfs, disported in the shadowing gleams of moonlight and fat-pots,—curious to see and contemplate. A robber from the Rhine (a long way from it) arm-in-arm with an Archbishop of Canterbury; a laughing siren coaxing a monk to send for something nice; a Grand Sultan, with a beard, fondling a child, its mother a tragic young person with severe look and long raven tresses (tragedy heroines generally have a plentiful display of black hair); a real noble Baron in gold and silver robes and coronet, actually drinking (on the sly) something that a rosy milkmaid gave him from her pails in a suspicious-looking bottle. Dancing was the order of the night until Richardson's gong beat us all out. One ethereal creature—a Columbine—in thinnest pure white gauze, embellished

with roses, and with her auburn hair floating in the wind, a 'Venus' in figure, her face divine; such was the impression on my young brain (if I had any), for the most striking telling features of this lovely being were her pink legs! Bewildered, I offered to pay twice over, and ran against a pantaloon, who told me 'to mind what I was up to.' Seated in the first row of the pit, I was roused from a reverie of bliss by a loud thump of a large drum, sounded by a black man. Three fiddlers, two French horns and a fife completed the music—the drum doing the most. Tinkle, tinkle, sounds a bell, up goes the curtain to a short and deeply romantic play, in one act, and with a striking title (often the most important part of a play).

'THE TYRANT OF THE EAGLE CASTLE ON THE RHINE!'

Here was food for imagination! Such horrible events stained the banks of the

beautiful Rhine (called *Rind* by the ladies and gentlemen acting), that I shudder now to recur to them. Anything that happened was through 'love'—the old story. A very sour old Baron, christened 'Herr Graf Skemerhausenberg,' lived in this eagle's nest, his principal employment robbing passing travellers, drinking hard, and wronging his only c-h-i-l-de (so pronounced). The Herr Graf's fortunes being at a low ebb and his temper at high tide, there were but two resources left to him—bankruptcy, or selling his daughter Ethelinda's hand (her heart might take care of itself) to an old crony and fellow-robber living hard by on the 'Teufel's Mount,' old enough to be the young lady's grandpa, but rich as a Jew. The idea pleased the sour Baron, but not the fair one with the golden locks. She loved another (not wisely but too well)—her gentle page. This a wine-bibbing serving-man told us over his

cups. There was an awful kick up between father and c-h-i-l-de when she flatly refused to marry the Duke of the Devil's Mount. Exit pa, swearing and cursing. Enter hastily the page, to comfort the weeping Ethelinda (this he did, kneeling in the usual method for stage comfort). Cruel parent re-enters, catches them 'spooning,' seizes Master Page and throws him out of the window into the *Rhind*. Ethelinda faints, Baron rejoices: sudden blow on the big drum: agitated retainer rushes in! 'The Devil's Duke is on the stairs,' loaded with money-bags. Pa drags his poor c-h-i-l-de up. 'To-night she shall be a Duchess, or join her page in the *Rhind*.' Scene changes to a chapel, with altar, a book, and five candles, prepared for a nuptial ceremony. Procession—sour Baron dragging in his reluctant daughter, and two retainers as witnesses. The Duke of Devil's Mount appears with his money-bags and three

followers, armed to the teeth. The marriage ceremony is all on one side—the bridegroom's; for the bride is insensible. The priest joins her stone-cold hands in the Duke of Devil's Mount's guilty grasp. Hold!—big drum again!—rolls of thunder upon it—the black man wildly throwing his arms and sticks about—blue fire!—altar opens up—rises gracefully a ghost in white—mother in the flesh to Ethelinda. 'Stop, ruthless man!' cried the spirit. 'My mother's voice!' cries the daughter. ''Tis false!' roars sour Hausen. The bridegroom says nothing. Tableau of terror. In front of the show the audience crying, and wondering what would come next. The deceased Baroness makes short work of it, by taking her wicked husband downstairs in red fire. Trumpets, shouts, our page (not drowned) rushes in with an army. He kills Devil's own, kisses Ethelinda, and makes the priest marry them off-hand, to

loud applause, enlivened by the big drum and celestial violet-coloured fire.

Pantomime.

Harlequin Hoax, or Fairy Silver Bell, living in some Golden Lake. Jigs, dances, knocking down and picking up, red-hot pokers and sausages, formed the staple of this merry harlequinade.

There was no speaking; it was all action. Time flew merrily on. My parade-beauty gracefully displayed her pink legs in pose and jigs. Her familiarity with Harlequin became unbearable. Twelve minutes soon passed. Gong without sounds 'all out.' Big drum beats us out through the canvas doors into the thick of the fair. One more gaze on pink legs—ye gods! what did I see? My ethereal fairy drinking with Harlequin out of a pewter pot. 'Take a good pull, Susey,' says Motley. I heard no more:

my first love disappeared for ever in that fatal pot of beer.

A NORFOLK GIANT, ten feet high, invited us to visit him for a penny, in the place of invitation cards. This very promising youth of seventeen, so said the showman, 'never growed a "hinch" since he was fourteen.' The dwelling of this ten-foot youth puzzled me; it was not lofty enough to allow him to stand upright in; how about his sleeping accommodation? perhaps Nature provided for this by constructing his body on the telescopic principle, to draw in and out. Suffice it, there he stood, ten feet in his shoes—if you liked to believe it.

LITTLE MISS BIFFIN, a real *Norfolk Biffin*, born in Norwich, dwelt in a smart red-brick-coloured miniature mansion of the Queen Anne style, perhaps a yard in

elevation, width three quarters, real door and four windows, white steps, brass knocker, curtains painted deftly on the tiny panes of glass. This small lady, elegantly attired, received her numerous visitors through the roof of her house, raised by the obliging showman's wife; Miss Biffin's head, her face radiant with smiles, replacing the chimney-pots and tiles, her graceful legs dangled from the parlour windows, her arms displayed themselves from Miss Biffin's bed-chamber; one small hand grasped a bell: this she rang at the request of the show-lady, to prove there was no collusion between them. This we saw outside. Our penny paid, we met Miss Biffin inside, seated for our reception. Her manners were most affable and communicative; her family history was rapidly revealed. She then blandly intimated that she received no wages, depending on the liberality of her guests, at

the same time politely presenting a waiter. To this appeal we, of course, responded, Miss Biffin curtseying us out for others to walk in. 'What can she do with her money?' I asked myself; 'she can't walk about the streets to spend it, or go shopping.' This riddle was explained to me by a retired dwarf crossing-sweeper years afterwards: 'Vot, us have pocket-money? Humbug! all tips goes into the showman's pockets; we gets more kicks than 'apence; this 'ere church-crossin's a better game on Sundays—coppers I nails myself. There's the horgan a-blowin'—good-day, sir; the old uns are comin' out.'

1824. A *real Mermaid*, caught in the South Sea Islands, combing her hair, one Sunday morning—*vide* Bill. This siren of the Ocean turned out to be manufactured in Ratcliffe Highway, and to be neither more nor less than a monkey's head cleverly joined to a fish's body and tail. This *ruse*

deceived thousands, gentle and simple. Nothing bites so eagerly after novelty as your English gull, especially cockneys. Such, at least, was the opinion of Barnum, the great American showman.

A SMITHFIELD BALL.—A scrap of dirty paper posted on a door in Cock Lane gave this invitation: 'Up stairs, top floor, whilst the Fair's on; tup-pence a head. Penny the musicianer, to be paid when you comes in; no dancing without shoes, smoking, or swearing. Courting goes for nothing. It begins with a jig at 8, shuts up at 3.'

'MIKE MURPHY,

Him that fought the Game Chicken at Mouseley, year before last.'

A ruthless Act of Parliament swept Saint Bartlemy into oblivion! All its coarse fun, high and low jinks, are passed

for ever away! Yet its name is perpetuated for all time by gossiping Pepys, and in that racy old comedy written by 'rare Ben Jonson,' entitled 'Bartholomew Fair.'

CHAPTER III.

Sketch of Richardson's career—The Author introduces himself and is engaged—Edmund Kean.

MUSTER JACK RICHARDSON, first and last of showmen, was born in a village workhouse,—a mere waif and stray, cast without care or education upon the world, to live or die, as chance might arrange. This honest, charitable man began his remarkable career by exhibiting a little child with a spotted skin, called 'the Spotted Boy.' This small beginning proved profitable. Richardson made money, and saved it; but his pet died, to the great grief of his kind-hearted master. Our showman then travelled with a booth and a few show-folks,

in the small towns, performing at wakes and fairs, and establishing a good name for honesty and conduct. His theatre was enlarged yearly, until it became the largest in the kingdom. During St. Alban's Fair a fire consumed many poor people's cottages and furniture. A subscription was raised in the town for their relief; to this fund Richardson gave £200. This generous act won golden opinions from the nobility and gentry throughout the county. The Earl of Verulam gave him permission to perform plays for three weeks after the yearly fair. These performances paid well. For this especial purpose he always engaged regular actors from the London theatres to play the principal characters—'parts that his chaps warn't up to.' I applied to the old gentleman to act Romeo, George Barnwell, etc. His 'at home' was a caravan pitched in pretty fields, now Horsemonger Lane,

Southwark, but in 1826 it was still country. At my interview with him, with pardonable pride, I gave some bills from Hastings with my name in for capital business. Richardson looked at them with great gravity.

'Yes, I sees, young gentleman, you've been a-doing wery nice parts.'

He had read them upside down.

'I'll give you twenty-five shillin' a week; such as you, sir, keeps my fellows in order. Walk up; Lewis [his manager] shall give it you in writin'.'

I followed him into the prettiest home on wheels that could be conceived, containing every requirement for utility and comfort on the smallest possible scale. Apple-pie order prevailed. For cleanliness no Dutch house-wife ever excelled it. Doll's-house windows, with snow-white curtains, looped up with cherry-coloured ribbon; bright papering, rural scenes,

sheep and shepherds; pictures, the 'Prodigal Son' and 'Jacob at the Well'; Moore's Almanack and a likeness of his Spotted Boy; a tiny bed of the daintiest pattern, quilt of many colours in patchwork; Lilliputian table and chairs, shelves embellished by willow-pattern plates and brown jugs; a brass stove, shining like gold; a carpet, rug, and cat; kettle singing, canary-bird chirping, Dutch cuckoo-clock ticking, an easy chair and well-used pipe,—formed a picture of home-life worthy of illustration by a Teniers. His travelling theatre had from time to time proved a welcome refuge to the brethren of the sock and buskin, their precarious life too frequently forcing them to seek the old showman's employment for their daily bread. To his honour be it said that he always treated such comers with consideration and respect. Oxberry, a first-rate comedian, trod his parade; W. H. Payne, Anderton,

Huntley, and last, but not least, the crowning star, Edmund Kean. This celebrated man travelled with 'Muster' Richardson several years, playing tragedy, and combining with it comic singing and Harlequin's business. When Kean made his wonderful hit at Drury Lane, our 'genial showman' went to see him act Richard the Third. After the performance he crossed over to the O.P. and P.S. Tavern, Russell Street, to take his modest half-pint of porter: a bystander at the bar asked him if he liked Kean's acting. 'Like him, muster? why he nearly lifted me off my seat in his tent scene. Ah, but that's nothing to his Harlequin. See him hold Columbine on his leg, pitch up a bat and catch it; there was nature, if you like, and real acting. Good-night, muster.' Exit O.P. the old showman.

The rule laid down by 'Muster' Richardson was ever to keep his motley troupe re-

spectable: regular payments before leaving a town, decent clothes, etc., well knowing the value of a good name. On his first exhibition at Canterbury he called his manager Lewis to his assistance. 'See that my people, Lewis, dresses in their best clothes when they enters the *wenerable city*—mind, all clean linen. You take 'em round the town to see the sights, above all the old ancient cathedral. Don't let 'em play up no tricks in the Solomon building; it arn't right.'

At the death of this kindly old man he willed to be buried in the same grave with his early pet, the 'Spotted Boy,' in a rural village in Essex; in death as in life, still clinging to first impressions. 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.'

ANONYMOUS LETTER.—One of his company in fun sent the guv'nor a letter, threatening to set fire to his caravan and smother

him. This struck terror to the poor old man's heart. He confided in Paul Herring, his favourite clown, and asked him to read the 'apostle' (epistle), saying: 'This here *omnibus* letter comed last night, and I seed a willin', arter dark, a creepin' under my caravan, with a box o' prosperous matches; he wanted to blow me up like a Guy Faux. Oh! dearie me, Paul!'

CHAPTER IV.

Pavilion Theatre—'Props'—Richmond, Surrey—Ware, Hertfordshire—Ellen Tree—The Bargee's Methodist Wife—Margate—The 'White Hart' in Drury Lane—The 'Red Cow' at Chiswick—The Brothers Strickland and their Company—Sheridan's 'Pizarro'—Vagaries of Hodson, the Lawyer's Clerk.

PAVILION THEATRE, 1829.—Resolving to try real acting, I applied to the manager, Farrell, for an opening. His first inquiry was: 'Have you acted in public?' 'Yes, in an amateur theatre.' Reply: 'No use—what do you expect?' Answer: 'Nothing.' Manager: 'You are engaged, sir; come on Monday to rehearse. Mind—no salary, and find your own "props."' Bowing, I departed. 'Props,' thought I, 'what are

they ? crutches or walking-sticks ?' An old actor relieved my mind, over a glass of ale, as to the nature of 'props' or *properties*—boots, shoes, collars, wigs, feathers, tights, etc. I made my *début* under manager Farrell in twelve characters in the comic scenes of a pantomime, simply to be kicked and cuffed by Clown and Pantaloon. Remonstrating with my manager, he told me 'I was learning the A B C of my profession.' I thought differently, and left to improve my spelling at Richmond, Surrey, to play speaking parts at a guinea per week. Here Ira Aldridge acted Othello and Mungo in 'The Padlock'—a gentleman of colour, once servant to James Wallack, a clever man, decorated by most of the European Sovereigns for his ability in Shakesperian personations.

The season concluded, I proceeded to Hertfordshire to act with Ellen Tree at

Ware, a temporary Theatre at the 'French Horn' Inn; proprietor, Bullen; my *rôle*, light comedy; twenty-five shillings (if paid) weekly, finding my own wardrobe. I could not invest in 'consols' out of this. A cheap lodging at a bargee's cottage, cheaper living, dining frequently upon *hope*, digestion seldom disturbing my sleep. Sara, the bargee's wife, a rigid Methodist, styled in those parts a 'Pantiler,' eked out a small income by selling sweetstuff and baked pigs with currant eyes and hollow stuffing. Disappointed urchins nicknamed her 'Piggy' Wilks (her matrimonial name). Sara, who was an elder at a small 'Bethel' up a court, 'tea'd' and dined itinerant preachers, to the great disgust and loss of her better half, 'Bargee Tom.' The poor woman thought she had a call (she had many, indeed, for rent and taxes), and prayed earnestly in the hours of night to quell Satan; and I, who to my annoyance

was her next-room neighbour, found it anything but pleasant to be awaked with hymns, oaths, and struggles with Old Nick! One night she shouted out:

'I've got him.'

'Keep him,' I rejoined; 'hold on by his tail.'

Next morning I removed my quarters; pious lodgings did not pay. Ellen Tree acted in a room fitted up at the inn, six nights. Lady Teazle was her opening character, and Charles Surface mine. The stage consisted of planks laid on the floor; the scenes, of calico painted by the manager; the screen, a clothes-horse with a table-cloth pinned over it. The part of Lady Sneerwell was allotted to Mrs. Manageress Bullen, who, decked out in faded satin, rouge and feathers, wisely took money (no checks) in the passage. Miss Mordaunt (Mrs. Nesbitt) acted here for a time. I had a weary walk to London, sans coin!

My next peregrination was to Margate, joining Saville Faucit (father of Miss Helen Faucit), and receiving twenty-five shillings per week for acting juvenile heroes in comedy and tragedy. One labourer in this dramatic vineyard, known as Beresford (whilom an officer in the Life Guards, brought to grief and poverty by Madame Vestris), acted here for a guinea a week. His nephew being drowned at Eton, Beresford succeeded to a baronetcy as Sir William Anstruther, hereditary standard-bearer of Scotland. To his credit be it said that he never neglected the followers of the sock and buskin or their benefits.

Too frequently 'out-at-elbows,' I now applied to Ben Smithson's agency for actors, the 'White Hart' in Drury Lane. Kind-hearted, considerate Ben! a real Samaritan, ever ready with food and kindly words to cheer and encourage the poor

stroller. Ben, strongly impregnated with the 'Mysteries of Udolpho' school, was wont to use rather grandiloquent words for every-day purposes. His hostel—a very obscure one—became a 'castle;' back-parlours smelling strongly of 'baccy,' tapestry chambers; dilapidated staircases, lumber-closets and dark landings, 'galleries, crows'-nests and eagle-towers;' his beer-cellars were known as 'dungeon-keeps;' Barclay's Entire, at fourpence per pot, became 'Nectar,' like Mr. Dick Swiveller's 'rosy wine;' and his two serving-men, plain Bob and Dick, were transformed into 'Ricardo' and 'Roberto.' Every poor player that arrived, foot-sore and hungered, he styled according to their *rôle*—Kemble, Kean, Munden, or Siddons, knowing full well how pleasantly a little flattery tickles the palate. There was always a bed, supper and breakfast, money or not, in this Mecca for wanderers. This liberality brought

failure in its train, and the 'White Hart's' doors speedily closed on kindly Ben and his good intentions.

I next tried the 'Red Cow' at Chiswick for employment. The Brothers Strictland were lessees of a large Odd-Fellows' Lodge-room, called a *Theatre.* 'Brother' Bob Strictland became an actor at the Hay-market, leaving his mark for old men, especially 'My Lord Tom Noddy.' To save expense, I trudged to Chiswick on foot, accompanied by an eccentric lawyer's clerk of the name of Hodson, who was bitten with the Kean mania, and neglected briefs and writs for 'Brutus, Richard and Macbeth'—studies, alas! not so remunerative to poor Hodson as the Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas. Suffice it, we arrived at the 'Cow' about tea-time, and, asking for Strictlands, a pot-boy pointed where to find them. 'In the kitchin,' with a grin, said Pots. On the door a bill an-

nounced a London Company for ten nights only, to act at the 'Cow.' First night Sheridan's famed play of

'PIZARRO,

as played at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London, with elaborate scenery, and heart-rending effects! Pit, only one shilling! Boxes, two shillings seats; sixpence standing places. Seats booked at the "Cow" from 10 till 4 daily. Schools and children half-price.'

A farce, singing and dancing, concluded the Messrs. Strictlands' attractive programme. We made our way to the snug kitchen of the 'Cow,' and in it found assembled the company, dressed for their evening's performance, 'Pizarro.' At a table, superintending the tea, Elvira sat in faded black robes. This unfortunate Spanish lady wielded the tea-pot with much dignity ever and anon scowling at

her base betrayer, Pizarro. He sat aloof, encased in rusty tin armour, a ferocious wig, and look to match; no warlike truncheon did he flourish, but a long pipe, and what had been gin, now represented by an empty glass. Cora, lovely Peruvian maid, employed her soft hands in toasting muffins, assisted by her renegade husband, Spanish Alonzo. Their child, Peru's future king, innocently amused himself by crawling on the floor after a kitten. Rolla—heroic Rolla, first of patriotic warriors—was playing at dominoes with the high-priest, Orozembo. Valverde, in a corner, snored in trunks and boots, bereft of jerkin. Such was the heat of the climate, combined with the effects of something short, that Peruvians and Spaniards sat socially together, doing their pipes and beer. Ataliba—good monarch—was absent, evidently 'cut out,' as were all Pizarro's small fry of officers. Old Oro-

zembo doubled the sympathetic 'Sentinel;' a buxom chambermaid devoted her attentions to 'Brother Bob' (Strictland). Having an eye to business (good parts), our mission was soon fulfilled. Hodson was engaged to play Richard, and myself Richmond, on the Monday following, without fee or reward. We trudged back, highly elated, towards town, our way enlivened by sundry visits to public-houses, and any quantity of Hodson's imitations of popular actors. This produced such excitement in the lawyer's clerk that at Turnham Green he wildly jumped on a horse-trough, raving for a horse—offering to give his kingdom for one (*à la* Richard). This mad act mightily diverted the bystanders, an old ostler sagely remarking that 'the chap was off his nut' (head). When we reached Hyde Park Corner, Brutus addressed his Roman mob (be it remembered there were no police then),

'Romans, countrymen, and lovers,' to an audience of carters, idlers, boys, women, etc., who enlivened the scene by shouts and cries of 'Go it!' Our hero's frenzy culminated at Battle Bridge—he lived near the gigantic 'Dust Heap.' Rudely seizing a passing female, he d——d her for a lewd minx, and wanted to smother her, 'Othello' fashion. Dreadfully alarmed, she cried for help; it came. Hodson was knocked down, his clothes torn to tatters. Raving, struggling, shouting for his sword and buckler, he was carried to the Watch-house to ruminate on his folly. We did not enact at the 'Cow,' poor Hodson (Othello) being heavily fined for inebriated assault and battery.

CHAPTER V.

Brooke's Circuit—Tenterden—Hastings—A Moon on Fire—Klanert's Company at Richmond—The Author's Departure for Scotland—The Auld Henwife and the Player—Vandenhoff and the Thane of Fife—Sam Penley's Theatre at Windsor—Dalby's Theatre at Chelsea—Staunton, the Chess-player—Deptford Fair—Henry Neville and his Father—Olympic Theatre—The Author's Interview with Monsieur Leclerc—Chelmsford Races—Billy Hall, the Surrey 'Beauty'—Gravesend—The Author's first Essay in Dramatic Composition.

My wandering career led me to Master Brooke's pretty circuit—the small towns of Kent and Sussex—commencing at Tenterden, in the Weald of Kent. Brooke in his 'salad' days had played kings, nobles, peasants, etc., at Drury Lane, minus words. He married a lady vocalist, and

set up business on his own account, playing your Macbeths and Romeos himself.

The Theatre Royal, Tenterden, was situated in a stable-yard ; the entrance to the boxes was through a cottage kitchen, with scenes painted on both sides ; these did for everything, thus wisely economising labour. Our wardrobe was well worn, scanty, and of antique cut ; our lights oil-lamps. Our band numbered four ; the leader, first violin, played second old man, sang Irish songs, and attended to the lamps : these important offices brought poor Harvey one pound per week, not a large salary for this village Costa. Our prompter acted tyrants, and painted when required, at the moderate rate of eighteen shillings. The highest salary in this very primitive concern only reached one pound five, finding your own dresses. We opened with the 'Foundling of the Forest,' to an audience of one boy in

the Gallery; his sense of solitude caused him to fall asleep. Business improved, however, and 'Hamlet' brought us six pounds odd. During our few weeks' season, the theatre was well attended by the resident gentry, farmers, hop-growers, etc. Nelson's neglected daughter (the vicar's wife) came frequently to witness our performances.

HARE AND HOUNDS, HASTINGS.—Brooke's Theatre Royal (Rural). A converted barn —*converted*, not in a religious point of view, but by whitewash, canvas, and wreaths of paper flowers into some sort of shape; our stage, rough deals lent by a friendly theatrical enthusiast, a neighbouring builder; boxes, chairs; pit, benches; gallery, standing-places; prices high, two shillings, one shilling, and sixpence. Strange to say, the place was nightly crowded with the first families in Hastings and for miles round, and vastly they enjoyed the fun.

On one important occasion we were playing 'Pizarro' with extraordinary splendour and expense (so said our bills). Six Virgins of the Sun, procured with difficulty from the Hastings fishing population; eight Peruvian armed soldiers, farm-labourers, enticed by sixpence each and an order for their sweethearts to see our acting. 'Temple of the Sun,' resplendent with gold and silver foil; 'altar sacred to the god of Peru,' a tea-chest, covered with calico. The virgins in pure white, with golden suns (paper) hung round their fair necks, symbols of virginity; High-priest Brooke, robed and bejewelled up to his eyes; army, virgins, court, Rollo, perjured Alonzo, King Ataliba, Orozembo, Cora, Elvira, concealed in white. A few in cloaks swelled our chorus, invoking the heathen gods. All this parade was by moonlight, a large hole cut in the temple, covered with gauze; behind this luminary a country boy, perched on a

ladder, held two large candles. The solemn procession entered, a death-like silence prevailed in the front of the house, and the rustic visitors in the gallery were struck with wonder and delight. A wire extending from the roof of the barn, to guide a bit of sponge dipped in spirits of wine, at a given signal descended to light the altar; that is, if the god assented, and the man above held the wire tight. The invocation to the Sun-god commenced; High-priest Brooke, with an awful and powerful voice, sang all the parts—out of tune. After much kneeling, crossing of hands, throwing up of arms, and sundry other movements, the priest and chorus burst out: 'Give praise, give praise, our god has heard!' (He must have been hard of hearing if he had not.) Lo and behold! the moon instead of the tea-chest was on fire, displaying the boy's face grinning through it. Alarm seized

the audience—screams of 'Fire! fire!' A stampede took place, everyone rushing to the barn-doors—virgins, army, and spectators—in one wild terror. Brooke rushed up the ladder, was seen cuffing the boy's head; he quickly descended, and heroically taking his place at the tea-chest, sang 'Give praise, give praise, our god has heard!' This calmed the affrighted people, and our play proceeded amidst thunders of applause.

Encouraged by the 'Hare and Hounds' success, Brooke built a theatre in Hastings, and failed. We played there, a good company, with Charles Kemble as star, to £20. Rayner drew £5, etc. Wisely, the theatre was changed into a chapel, paying its owner.

RICHMOND, SURREY.—Joined Klanert's company, playing tragedy, comedy, etc., to our veteran manager's Macbeths, Romeos,

at the ripe age of sixty-four. An actor of small parts at Covent Garden, Klanert, on his own ground, Richmond, became an actor of great proportions—so at least he thought. Always letter-perfect himself, he imagined everyone else ought to be so. Unfortunately, on one occasion I was very imperfect when playing Malcolm to Klanert's Macbeth. I failed to speak the tag perfectly, not getting further than

> 'My Thanes and kinsmen,
> Henceforth be—' (*a pause*).

I had forgotten what they were to be. Dead tyrant lying at my feet: 'Go on, sir.' I tried in vain to raise my kinsmen and Thanes to peerages.

IRATE DECEASED: 'Will you go on?'

I whispered, 'I cannot.'

Up jumps the dead king:

'I'll speak for you, sir:

> '"Henceforth be Earls,
> So thanks to all at once, and to each one,
> Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone."'

And calmly lying down, he died again, loudly applauded and laughed at. I received my *congé* on the following Saturday.

Exit from England for Scotland. Hamilton, Inverary, Stirling; William Ryder manager. Hard work and small pay, with the advantage, however, that living was cheaper then. My board and lodging seldom exceeded twelve shillings per week, and this with no stint. New-laid eggs were abundant in the Burgh of Hamilton. Mistress MacFarlane, the hen-wife, supplied me with them, bringing them to my lodging at twelve for a shilling. I tried one day to get fourteen. This highly incensed and offended the 'puir body,' and she cut off the supplies! I went to the market, endeavouring to re-establish myself in the 'gude wife's' opinion. Alas! I failed. 'Dinna ye fash, Mister Stirling; ye'll ha nae mair o' my hen's eggs. They shall nae tak' the trouble to lay 'em for

fourteen a shillin', laddie. If ye maun hae cheap eggs, mon, lay 'em yoursel'.'

I next entered into an engagement with Bass and wife, or rather with wife and Bass, for she ruled the roast—in Edinburgh, Dundee, Selkirk, and Perth. My reward for playing second tragedy, first comedy, and melodrama, amounted to thirty shillings weekly (when paid, which too often it was not). Nearly five hundred miles to travel, all comedy dresses to furnish, and to live on such a stipend! Rather different an actor's position nowadays, in this year of grace, 1880, with pieces running hundreds of nights, and salaries fabulously high for very little real work. A weary journey by the 'High-flyer' coach, starting from the 'Saracen's Head,' Snow Hill (Mr. Squeers's London quarters), on a cold November morning. It rained, snowed, and hailed

the whole way, three days and two nights —outside! I opened in Dundee as Mercutio, playing every night, tragedy or comedy. Books being few, we had to write out our parts, conveying the books to each other—always ladies first. Bass never paid regularly; a few shillings grudgingly doled out from time to time scarce kept life and soul in us. In sober literal fact we were well-nigh starved. And let the reader recollect that escape was not easy—there were no railways or cheap steamers running then. Our labours were divided between Perth and Dundee for three winter months, a wretchedly horsed coach conveying us to and fro, a distance of twenty-five miles. Acting Macduff to Vandenhoff's Macbeth in Perth, during our desperate combat my plaided kilt fell down, exhibiting my flesh-tights, to the disgust of many and to the delight of the gallery, McDonalds, Dun-

cans and Sandys. Confused beyond belief, I snatched up my garment, fighting Macbeth rapidly, encouraged by the gods' applause.

'Gi' it him, laddie; strike hame. Gi' him his parritch!'

Vandenhoff declined my Thane of Fife ever after.

Returning per Leith smack southwards, I found a temporary engagement at Windsor, with Sam Penley, of Drury Lane, as manager. It was Race week. Eton boys were admitted for two shillings and sixpence each, from six until eight; the signal for their departure was the ringing of the college bell. A pretty game they had, laughing and talking to the actors and actresses during their performance, shooting peas at the heads of the unfortunate fiddlers, sliding down pillars from gallery to boxes, etc. Penley, however, made

money by this, and his regular audience came in at eight from the races.

CHELSEA, SLOANE STREET.—A person named Dalby opened a small theatre in a garden, and engaged a company on the share system. My share for acting three parts in one evening—the Stranger, Philip in 'Luke the Labourer,' etc.—resulted in twopence, and a walk home to Mile-End. In his younger days Staunton, the famous chess-player and editor of Shakespeare, essayed acting here, but wisely abandoned it. Othello was not his forte.

DEPTFORD FAIR.—Marquis manager. A very old hand at taking money at the doors, and, moreover, at keeping it. 'Merchant of Venice.' Stage over a canal. Result: Marquis ran away with the treasury; we, poor gulls, tramped home in high dudgeon. Harry Neville

and his brother date from Deptford; their father, John Neville, became lessee, and educated his clever sons for the stage at Deptford.

OLYMPIC THEATRE. — 'Dr. Blue Pill' Scott, lessee. On my applying to the doctor for employment, he referred me to his manager, Monsieur Leclerc, father of Carlotta and Rose Leclerc. After waiting a long time on the stage the great (small) man approached me, decked in a Turkish robe, with slippers and fez to match. My business stated, Leclerc asked me to recite Shakespeare's 'Seven Ages.' This done, I was dismissed with an abrupt and authoritative 'It won't do, sir, stick to your business;' and he disappeared, robe and slippers. A little disconcerted, I groped my way out at the dingy stage-door, reflecting that I had no business to stick to. In after-life Leclerc

and I reversed positions. He became the applicant and I the employer.

CHELMSFORD RACES, ESSEX, 1829.—Quakers' metropolis for grain and malt. The Aminadabs and Obadiahs had chosen a pretty place for their 'thys' and 'thous.' Billy Hall, nicknamed 'the Surrey Beauty' for his extreme ugliness, filled the managerial throne. We had sorry houses up to eight, when the racing-folks came in at half-price. A severely contested County Election helped us considerably. Hall paraded the town with a band, utilising both the candidates' colours—orange and pink—on a large flag, inscribed 'Vote for Billy Hall at the Theatre. Billy is for Whig and Tory and his pockets full of money. God save the King. Come early. Good luck to you.'

GRAVESEND, 1829.—A good theatrical town. Ships going out and coming in

filled the small theatre with sailors and their sweethearts. These, together with a few townsfolk and a sprinkling of fishermen, formed a lively audience, easily pleased with my first essay in authorship—a piece founded on Scott's 'Kenilworth,' artfully rechristened 'Tilbury Fort, or the Days of Good Queen Bess!' It drew a house. Mr. and Mrs. Keeley and Mrs. Fitzwilliam 'starred' with us. A sister of Mrs. Orger acted in the company, and obtained for her benefit stars from Drury Lane, to outshine us poor planets—Mrs. Waylett, Mrs. Nesbitt (then Miss Mordaunt), Wallack, Harley, and the autocrat of Drury, Alexander Lee, composer of 'I'd be a Butterfly,' 'Blue Bonnets over the Border,' 'Meet me by Moonlight Alone,' a suggestive ballad for young ladies. We played a comedy, and 'A Roland for an Oliver.' MARIA DARLINGTON, *Mrs. Waylett;* ALFRED HIGHFLYER, *E. Stirling.* Sad

to acknowledge, I knew little about High-flyer; in theatrical parlance, 'I broke down,' whispering to our celestial vistant:

'You must finish; I don't know another word.'

Maria laughed, sang a ballad, and pleased everybody, none being the wiser for the cutting out. She kindly urged Lee to engage me for Drury for my impudence. He thought better of it.

CHAPTER VI.

At Croydon—Buckstone's 'Wreck Ashore'—Edmund Kean—His letter to the author—The author's engagement with Farrell at the Pavilion—Douglas Jerrold's 'Martha Willis'—The author marries Miss Fanny Clifton—Liverpool and Manchester—Great success of the author's piece, 'Sadak and Kalasrade'—Paganini's visit to Manchester—Stalybridge—John Neville—Primitive 'Properties'—Local Post-Office, curious direction of a letter—Oldham—'Black-Eyed Susan'—Bolton—Macbeth without Macduff—Harriet Mellon, afterwards Duchess of St. Albans—Warrington—'Sadak and Kalasrade' again—Ashton-under-Lyne—Preston—'Mrs. Wolf'—Early struggles of Phelps—Theatre Royal, Birmingham—Sheridan Knowles—Anecdote of an Actor and his dog—Alfred Mellon—Miss O'Neil at Belfast—Division (not according to Cocker).

My next destination was Croydon. We buried the poor Surrey 'Beauty' at Gravesend, and opened with his widow at

Croydon, then a small place, with but few inhabitants. Miss Foote bade farewell to the country stage here. I played in Lord Glengall's comedy, 'Follies of Fashion,' with her. The Adelphi company came with Buckstone's 'Wreck Ashore.' After this excellent drama had been rejected by half the managers in London, it found a home at the Adelphi.* Original cast: *Miles Bertram*, Yates; *Grampus*, O. Smith; *Walter Barnard*, Hemming; *Magog*, John Reeve; *Jemmy Starling*, Buckstone; *Alice*, Mrs. Yates; *Bella*, Mrs. Fitzwilliam.

Edmund Kean acted two nights with raised prices, and to overflowing houses, in the 'Merchant of Venice,' and the 'Iron Chest.' Gratiano in the 'Merchant,' and Wilford in the 'Iron Chest,' were allotted to me. Having arrived at the

* Represented for the first time 21st October, 1830.

troublous but coveted honour of stage-manager, Kean wrote to me thus :

'St. John's Wood, Nov. 8, 1829.

'SIR,

'I shall not require rehearsals for my plays ; but be particular in your selection of Wilford. He is all-important to me. I will run through the Library scene with him when I come down. He must be young, mind.

'Yours obediently,

'E. KEAN.

'To Mr. Stirling,

'Theatre, Croydon.'

When Kean arrived, he sent for me to his dressing-room.

'You are rather tall, sir.'

Rejoinder :—'Yes, sir. What do you wish me to do ?'

KEAN : 'Why, in the Library scene,

sink gradually on your right knee, with your back to the audience. When I place my hand on your head to curse, mind you keep your eyes fixed on mine.'

(No very easy task to look steadily at such eyes.)

'Is that all, sir?'

KEAN: 'Yes—do whatever you like after that; it will be all the same to me.'

This was not quite so elaborate an affair as some of our modern tragedians' rehearsals. I pleased Kean and the audience by my acting of Wilford, and the great little man was pleased to say that 'I did it well—very well.'

Farrell made me an offer to act at the Pavilion. Tempted by the salary—two pounds a week—I agreed, playing first-rate comedy and seconds in tragedy. Charles Freer, our leading man, brought from Nottingham, was thus modestly announced: 'Garrick came from the East, why not

another star from the same hemisphere? See Freer and judge for yourselves. At six our new Roscius appears in a great character! Come early to secure good places, but don't come with children in arms.'

Cobham, a capital actor, was in the company. He was howled down by wolves at Covent Garden — a club of Keanites. Junius Brutus Booth shared the same fate.

Douglas Jerrold produced his 'Martha Willis,' illustrative of London life in the seventeenth century. Our manager dressed the piece in the costumes of 1830. The author of 'Mrs. Caudle's Lectures' resented this anachronism by bitter sarcasm, telling Farrell (who wore Hessian boots), 'D——n it, sir, I expected brains, not boots!'

Before I quitted the Pavilion, I found a better half in FANNY CLIFTON. We married at once; started for Liverpool with Davidge, at the Amphitheatre; London Company,

Watkin Burroughs stage-manager; Batty furnished horses and his equestrian troupe. Burroughs resigned, and I accepted the management.

QUEEN'S THEATRE, MANCHESTER.—Harry Beverly's direction. Myself and wife were engaged to lead the business; this proved very bad—salaries stopped, no resources. What was to be done? It occurred to me to try my hand at writing a piece for a benefit. The subject I chose was 'Sadak and Kalasrade.' It was beautifully placed on the stage, and the scenery painted by William Beverly, the eminent artist. Beverly cleared one thonsand pounds by this piece: I received sixty. Fortune smiled; my pen now went at tip-top speed —pieces written and produced plentiful as blackberries—quantity rather than quality was the order of the day.

PAGANINI came to Manchester during

our season ; his wonderful performances on the one-stringed violin created a furore—a single night produced £1100. His appearance and manner were unearthly. Having no expenses, except a pianist (Miss Watson), he speedily amassed a large fortune, retired to Italy,* and died before he could enjoy it.

STALEYBRIDGE, a factory village near Manchester.—During our vacation, our Company engaged to play with John Neville, a popular actor and manager, at second-class towns in Cheshire and Lancashire. The Staleybridge Temple of the Muses was a large room in the Town Hall. Two or three scenes served every purpose, much being left to the fancy and imagination of the 'factory hands,' who were our chief supporters. An egg-chest extemporised did duty for defunct Ophelia's coffin.

* Or rather, to what was then Italy. He died at *Nice*, May, 1840.

Juliet's balcony was a large kitchen table covered with carpet.

At the small post-office, a cottage, the custom was to place all undelivered letters in the window to be claimed. The direction of one ran thus: 'To Biddy O' Shaughnessy my wife works at some Factory in some Bridge close upon Manchester in Great Britan—England—ples tell Biddy to call for it.' Post-mark New Orleans, America.

Our shares grew 'beautifully less' nightly, Manager Neville sedulously looking after himself. We tried Oldham, 1834. Here I played William in 'Black-Eyed Susan.' Court-martial: a table, big drum, cocked hat, and manager's son—a boy. All the witnesses and captains were spoken of, not seen; the boy admiral, or I should rather have said cocked hat, tried and condemned me off-hand, telling me 'I need

not trouble about witnesses.' He, the hat, knew all about me; further, having consulted with the captains, they all agreed I ought to be hung, and hung I should be at the yard-arm. 'This court now dissolves' (*loud noise on drum*). I was removed by a marine in a hussar-jacket. The ridiculous could go no further; I quitted Oldham forthwith in great disgust, and with small gain.

BOLTON.—Another of Neville's Theatres, in this case a real one. 'Macbeth' acted without Macduff; Neville played Macbeth and Hecate (in a cloak), singing well. His family doctor kindly fought the tyrant in the absence of the Thane of Fife, at Manchester. Neville spoke his own part and Macduff's, addressing the astonished medical gentleman:

'You would say, then' (Shakespeare's words), 'you're not of woman born.'

He seized the trembling actor (a very old one).

'Damn'd be you if you call out enough.'

An awful fight, on Neville's side. Macduff cautiously held up his sword, to protect his gray head.

In the house where I lived there once dwelt a poor strolling actress, named Mellon; her little child, a pretty girl, daily left to the kindly protection of the landlady, who fed Harriet Mellon with her own children, principally on porridge. Mrs. Mellon, ill-paid, ill-fed, could scarcely keep herself. 'Many and many a meal I've given the poor child, when its mother was a play-acting up at play-house,' said the good woman in her garrulous fashion. This little starveling lived to be Duchess of St. Alban's. When fickle Fortune smiled, be it recorded to her honour that Harriet Mellon did not forget the humble landlady at Bolton-le-Moors.

WARRINGTON, LANCASHIRE.—Our Protean Neville appeared again on the scene: he seemed to possess the genius of ubiquity. The sagacious Neville very reasonably thought that 'Sadak and Kalasrade' having brought money in Manchester, would draw in Warrington. Borrowing the dresses, banners and finery, to Cheshire I proceeded, forwarding the luggage a day or two before. To my horror, when I arrived our British Barnum had hung out the banners, dresses, etc., from the Theatre windows in a public street, a poster explaining to the admiring crowd outside that he wished to satisfy them that the great Manchester drama with its author, Edward Stirling, was coming. No increase of prices; advising factory lads and lasses to come early, and in their Sunday clothes. A gentle reminder accompanied this polite invite, viz., that bad language and short pipes must be suspended. One sensible factory-hand,

vacantly looking at this Oriental tawdry, was heard to say to his mate, Jock-o'-the Street, 'We'll spend our shilling in some'at that 'll do us good, lad; Master Neville's outside is better than his inside by a long chalk.'

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.—Neville's towns were legion, great and small—this enterprising man took all, haphazard. If they paid, well and good; on the contrary, failing, he shut up; his actors going penniless. His system, too often practised on the ignorant natives, was to put out a bill of astounding novelties, never before seen or dreamt of, generally issued on a Saturday (the pay-day at the cotton-mills), thus entrapping the lads and lasses. At night came an apology—sudden death, shipwreck, non-arrival of actors from London—anything; the wily manager blandly telling his disappointed hearers that he would act

and sing to them in the highly entertaining piece of 'The Two Gregorys, or the Orphan of Geneva.' This happened so frequently in Stockport, that whenever Neville attempted to apologise, the lads in the gallery stopped him: 'Noa, noa, Master Neville, we won't ha' "Two Gregorys" th' night.' Drinkwater Meadows (Drinkwater! what a name for a Temperance Society!) came for six nights, and played one to eight shillings, sharing after five pounds. With tears in his eyes he offered Neville the five pounds to let him go back home to London. The delighted manager joyfully consented. Three Mondays we dismissed—no receipts. Resolved if the living would not come, I would try the dead, on the walls of a churchyard I had pictures and posters pasted for my Benefit. This had some effect. Seventeen pounds five shillings was received at the doors—goodness knows how much more! Neville

being money-taker, without checks or account-books.

At Preston I resided with a Mrs. Wolf. Samuel Phelps, then a poor actor, not afterwards unknown to fame—whose name has already appeared in these Recollections—had formerly occupied my rooms in the Wolf's Den. She was a perfect Sycorax, with one eye that invariably scored double her lodgers' chops, potatoes and sundries! She had many traditional anecdotes to tell of players' privations, and of her own Christian feelings—of Phelps among the rest;—his salary small, little to spare;—his wife and children lived on a meat-pie for a week! Mrs. Wolf had a remarkable aptitude for forgetting small change and for sharing the contents of the tea-caddy with her lodgers. Determined not to be a loser by these little peculations, I repaid this attention by forgetting her last week's rent.

THEATRE ROYAL, BIRMINGHAM, 1835.—A rare jump, in earnest—five pounds per week, and manager! Capital season—Yates with the 'Jewess' and a hundred suits of *real* armour! Rachel, Mrs. Yates; Eleazar, Yates. Sheridan Knowles in his own play of 'William Tell,' a Swiss patriot, with an Hibernian flavour and accent. Kind gentle Knowles! he did nothing wrong, and very little right. Macready gave six performances, and a seventh gratis for my Benefit. An actor at a small theatre in the Bull-ring tried a novel experiment to gain a Benefit. Round the neck of his dog he tied a label, 'Come and see to-night!' Bow, wow! 'Only sixpence.' This and the actor dressed in Shylock's gaberdine paraded the streets, drawing attention if nothing else.

ALFRED MELLON played triangles in our orchestra. Born in Birmingham; his father

a French emigrant. On this stage he first saw Sarah Woolgar, whom he wooed and married. Clever and industrious, he rose from the triangle to the baton of a leader and composer at Covent Garden; but unfortunately speculating in pantomime and concerts, lost his money; and, sad to record, died at an early age, much lamented.

Miss O'Neil, at Belfast, playing her famous 'Juliet,' in the final tomb-scene the property-man had forgotten to place a dagger for Juliet to stab herself. When she finds her Romeo slain, what was she to do? how kill herself? She clenched her hand, feigned to stab her fair bosom with an imaginary weapon, dying with her lover. Such was their respect for the great actress, that the audience took no notice of this until the curtain fell. Then and only then the long pent-up laughter burst from boxes, pit, and gallery.

NOTTINGHAM. — Division (not according to 'Cocker'), 1790.—'Jemmy White,' manager of a very primitive theatre in this now flourishing town, was famous for his eccentricity. He played all the best parts in everything (managers generally do). When he enacted 'Othello,' Zanga in 'The Revenge,' or Mungo in 'The Padlock,' he uniformly coloured himself black from head to foot. This, he said, gave him a better idea what a black man should feel and be. Jemmy dressed for his characters at home, walking through the streets to the theatre perfectly unconcerned and unnoticed. There were no rude boys to shout, and no policemen to interfere with his singular arrangements. The following was Mr. White's manner of payment on Saturday nights at his treasury, where the assembled company were anxiously waiting: 'There's so much for me, for acting and management,'— counting money. 'Then

there's so much for rent, oil, and candles. Then there's so much for scenery and dresses—a trifle for wear and tear. Then there's so much left for you : take it, divide it among yourselves—mind, all fair—and thank God you've got it. Good-night !' And thereupon the treasury closed, too frequently on the poor players' aching hearts for their miserable pittance after so much labour.

CHAPTER VII.

Adelphi—Yates's Company, 1836—Kenneth's corner Shop—'Jim Crow' Rice—Yates on the Hustings—The Author's adaptation of 'Nicholas Nickleby'—'Siege of Jerusalem'—Theatre Royal, Dublin—Yates and the beautiful Laura Honey—Theodore Hook's Bon-mot—A Baptist Minister quoting Shakespeare—Chester Theatre—'Ten Thousand a Year'—Letter from Buckstone—Gainsborough——Tom Robertson and the Beer Barrel—The Author's Drama of the 'Demon Dwarf'—The Gnome Fly—Old Mrs. Baker (Canterbury Theatre, 1800)—Newcastle-under-Lyne—Havoc caused by a Bull-dog—Hereford Race and Assize Week—Leominster—Adelphi, 1841—'Tower of the Rhine'—Carles the Clown as an Undertaker's Mute—At the White Lion, Kidderminster—False Alarm of Fire—Mrs. Waylett and Alex. Lee—Lee's Duel with the Author as Mrs. Waylett's champion.

AT the *Adelphi*, in 1836, Yates collected a company seldom if ever surpassed for

talent, including T. P. Cooke, John Reeve, Buckstone, O. Smith, Hemmings, Wright, Lyon, Yates; Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, Miss Fortescue, Mrs. Keeley, Mrs. F. Mathews, Mrs. Stirling (E. Stirling, Stage-Manager). Among our novelties ranked a burlesque, styled 'Quadrupeds,'—animals personated by various bipeds. THE LION, *John Reeve.* This transformation he objected to.

'I won't wear a lion's skin, to make an ass of myself, for love or money.'

He yielded to the latter temptation, however, in the shape of an increased salary. On one more condition the royal beast consented to roar.

'Mind, Fred, I must have a lioness.'

1836.—There was a corner shop, with one window in Russell-street and the other in Bond-street, filled with play-books, bills, and portraits of favourite per-

formers of that day. Its proprietor Kenneth, agent, and small edition of gossiping Pepys, without his 'Diary.' His shop lived and thrived on chit-chat and gossip generally, liberally supplied by both sexes of players, those in and those out of engagements, who met at Kenneth's corner to learn what was going on in their mimic world, the stage. Authors, idlers, critics (that would be), artists, assembled to chatter and to buy small stationery (an excuse for loitering). Every scandal, true or false, found its way to the 'corner,' nothing reduced or omitted, depend upon it, by the carrying; divorces (then a rare luxury), elopements (frequent occurrences), Gretna Green helping the runaways vastly. Kenneth, an oracle in his fashion, usually decided any difficult point when hotly disputed, somewhat in the style of Captain Cuttle's sailor friend, Jack Bunsby, by simply saying nothing.

Money was made by agency and tittle-tattle. Kenneth quitted the 'corner' to hatch chickens at Hammersmith, embarking his capital in a bubble joint-stock scheme, viz., to hatch chickens in ovens, without hens. This failed; eggs declined to hatch; shareholders had counted their chickens before hatching. The result was Basinghall-street for poor Kenneth, and the 'corner' that had known him knew him no more.

Jim Crow Rice, 1837, notable as the first nigger singer and actor whom Brother Jonathan introduced to us, long before Christy, Dumbletons, or Moore and Burgess thought of it. Rice appeared first at the Surrey, where he drew large audiences. He was let to Yates by Davidge for a consideration, to appear in a piece written by Leman Rede, called a 'Trip to New York.' In this he introduced his celebrated song, 'Jim Crow.' This comical

effusion became the rage. Organs, street-singers, concerts, were all 'Jump-Jim-Crow' mad. A massive silver snuff-box being presented to Rice by Yates, the latter asked Jim Crow 'for his crest.

'Same as "Spring Rice,"* to be sure, was the reply.

YATES ON THE HUSTINGS. WESTMINSTER ELECTION.—Yates voted for the Conservative candidate early in the morning to escape recognition. But his precaution was all in vain: the Covent Garden porters, mob, etc., quickly espied their favourite.

'Halloa, Yates, voting for the Tory against us! Oh, oh!'

Yates bowed, placed his hand on his bosom, vowed his heart was with them.

* The Rt. Hon. Spring Rice, then Chancellor of the Exchequer.

'Won't do; vote for Liberty and Hunt!'

'Ladies and gentlemen' (*Hear!*). 'On this joyous occasion pray be merciful—on this my first appearance on a political stage, and I promise you the *last!* You may return Old Nick if you like; my wish is ever to please my best supporters, the people.'

('*Hurrah! bravo! give us "Jim Crow!*"')

In an instant Yates, to the immense amusement of all and everybody, whistled the tune and danced a breakdown round the hustings, singing:

'Wheel about,
Jump about,
Vote just so;
Let your bobs
Be spent
On my Jim Crow.'

Thunders of applause, and *encores*, and exit Fred down the steps from the boards of Westminster's political stage.

For the Adelphi Company I adapted Dickens's 'Nicholas Nickleby' in 1838. It was performed at that theatre for the first time on November 19, 1838. The piece had a long run, one hundred and sixty nights. The following was the original cast :*

* 'He (Dickens) had been able to sit through Nickleby, and to see a merit in parts of the representation. Mr. Yates had a sufficiently humorous meaning in his wildest extravagance, and Mr. O. Smith could put into his queer angular oddities enough of a hard dry pathos to conjure up shadows at least of Mantalini and Newman Noggs. A quaint actor, named Wilkinson, proved equal to the drollery, though not to the fierce brutality of Squeers; and even Dickens, in the letter telling me of his visit to the theatre, was able to praise "the skilful management and dressing of the boys, the capital manner and speech of Fanny Squeers, the dramatic representation of her card-party in Squeers's parlour, the careful making-up of all the people, and the exceedingly good tableaux formed from Browne's sketches. Mrs. Keeley's first appearance beside the fire, and all the rest of Smike, was excellent."'—FORSTER'S *Life of Charles Dickens*, Book II., § 4.

Ralph Nickleby . .	*Cullenford.*
Nicholas Nickleby .	*John Webster.*
Newman Noggs . .	*O. Smith.*
Mantalini . . .	*Yates.*
Squeers . . .	*Wilkinson.*
Scaley	*Saunders.*
Smike	*Mrs. Keeley.*
John Browdie . .	*H. Beverly.*
Mrs. Nickleby . .	*Miss O. Neil.*
Kate Nickleby . .	*Miss Cotteril.*
Madame Mantalini .	*Miss Shaw.*
Miss Knagg . . .	*Miss George.*
Miss Squeers . .	*Miss Gower.*
Miss Price . . .	*Miss Grove.*
Mrs. Squeers . .	*Mrs. Fosbroke.*

A dramatic version of Tasso's 'Siege of Jerusalem' introduced a *great man* to the English public, the 'Belgian Giant.' Not very complimentary this to Italy's great poet, to render him the vehicle for a showman's ware.

DUBLIN THEATRE ROYAL. — Hither we proceeded with our giant and a troupe of performing monkeys. Yates loved extremes. 'Othello' and the Giant and Monkeys were honoured by a Vice-regal command from Lord Ebrington. Douglas Jerrold always styled Yates 'Punch,' and perhaps the term was not misapplied. Anything to attract, from a tame elephant to a gnome fly, nothing came amiss, to draw the public, with Yates. He always strove for three figures—a hundred pounds per night. Yates, alive for attraction, especially if it happened to be of the female gender, lost his theatrical heart when the beautiful Laura Honey appeared at the Adelphi; he was fairly caught in the siren's net. The Marquis of Clanricarde gave a bachelors' dinner-party, to which Yates, with other celebrities, was invited. The guests assembled, of whom the famous wit, Theodore Hook, happened to be one;

and dinner served, the noble host, looking round, missed Yates.

'Not here? where can the fellow be?'

HOOK: 'Pardon me, my lord, he's studying Dr. Watts's well-known hymn:

'"How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather *Honey* all the day
From every opening flower.'"

When the Adelphi magnate did arrive, he was received with a hearty burst of laughter.

BRISTOL, AVON-SIDE.—At a chapel I heard a Baptist minister in his sermon quote Shakespeare's 'Tempest' verbatim, illustrating the fallibility of all human and worldly projects, by repeating the speech of Prospero to Ferdinand:

'The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.'

CHESTER THEATRE. — Adelphi Company. One performance, 'The Wreck Ashore,' and my farce, 'Bachelors' Buttons.' O. Smith being ill, I doubled 'Grampus' and the 'Smuggler,' and Walter Barnard (Lover) played the *two* parts in *duo* voices; our discerning auditory never discovered O. Smith's absence.

WARREN'S 'TEN THOUSAND A-YEAR.'— Dramatised from his novel, by the author, for the Adelphi. Buckstone, then in America, wrote to Yates on the subject:

'New York.

'DEAR YATES,

'Here's a chance for you! "Ten Thousand a-Year"—take it at once? What a poster you'd make—red, blue, and white—"Adelphi, every night! Yates and Gammon!"—with I can't tell the number of notes of admiration! Do it!

'Yours,

'BUCKY.'

He did do it most successfully.

GAINSBOROUGH, LINCOLNSHIRE.—Acting with Robertson, father of Tom Robertson, afterwards the distinguished author of '*Caste*,' etc. On the arrival of Robertson and his company about once in two years, it was customary for the landlord of the 'Bull Hotel' to present him and his numerous family with a large cask of home-brewed ale for their Christmas enjoyment. Old Mrs. Robertson, noticing that the ale disappeared uncommonly fast, resolved to watch Master Tom at the barrel (it was his office to draw the ale for dinner and supper). She found him drinking heartily. An ingenious invention of the old lady's stopped Master Tommy's indulgence. She always waited at the top of the cellar-stairs, and if she heard a pause, called out:

'Whistle, Tommy, whistle!'

The poor lad was done. Many a mournful ditty answered grandmother's 'Whistle!'

GNOME FLY, AT CANTERBURY.—A drama, the 'Demon Dwarf,' written by myself, introduced this nondescript to the Kentish metropolis. Our Fly proved a failure. Nothing daunted, the little man, habited as 'Napoleon' in grey coat, 'Marengo' cocked-hat, mounted on a large grey horse, paraded the streets. Folks wondered, boys shouted; to the cavalry barracks he galloped, soliciting a 'bespeak' for his (the Fly's Benefit. Answer, 'No.' Napoleon's cocked-hat could not rouse their military ardour to part with coin. We quickly returned to town in the Fly's cab, minus expenses.

The GNOME FLY'S next appearance was at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. Notices had appeared in all the daily papers for some weeks before, announcing a forthcoming wonder (of natural history), and posters had been stuck on every wall, with this curious question, '*What is it?*' Here

was a real puzzle for the wonder-seeking public! Exhibition—large room—at one end an iron cage kept dark. In this cage could be seen a strange object, neither man nor beast, crawling, jumping, and howling frightfully! Unearthly utterances came from 'what-is-it's' throat—a shaggy black skin, claws, and a head like nothing seen before or since. Crowds flocked to see 'what-is-it;' wise and simple paid their shillings, with the same result, 'What is it?' At last, one fatal day, before a crowded room, poor Hervio Nano, the Fly, was caught by an envious spider (a rival showman), who, marching up to 'what-is-it's' den, called out, 'Now, Mr. Harvey Leach, come out of your hole; the game's up. Ladies and gents, you're paying to see an impostor. He's done this here gammon in my travelling show many a day years ago—first a wild wolf, then a *Hiceland* bear, or anything yer

liked. He did me once, now I'm even with him. Good-day.' And our Fly's evil genius departed. Harry Leach's trick vanished with him—his last show, alas! in the University Hospital, where he died penniless and friendless.

CANTERBURY THEATRE, 1800.—Old Mrs. Baker, manageress; an excellent woman, but totally uneducated. Her company—a small one—played many parts (doubled). The leading actor, stage-manager and prompter, Mr. Gardener, one night playing 'Hamlet,' forgot the words at 'To be, or not to be.'—After a long pause he imploringly pointed to the book, Mrs. Baker standing by, whispering to her:

'The word, the word.'

MRS. BAKER: 'What word, Jack?'

HAMLET: 'I can't go on.'

MRS. BAKER: 'Come off, then.'

TRAGEDIAN: 'The text, the text, woman.'

'You fool, what's a text to do with play-houses? Here's the book; take what you want;'—*throwing* the play at him.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYNE.—'Valsha,' spectacle, Adelphi company, preceded by a farce, 'Day after the Wedding.' A character, old Mrs. Davis, quitting her service, takes leave of her mistress, loaded with pets, birds, cat, parcels, and a dog. A butcher in the town lent his 'Bob,' a bull-dog, well-known to the boys. On being introduced to the stage by a string held by Mrs. Davis, not liking the lights, he rushed forward, pulling the old body, birds, cat, etc., down. 'Bob,' espying the cat, sprang after her, upsetting everything. Lady Freelove screamed, her husband ran away, boys hurrah'd in the gallery 'Go it, Bob,' whistling and encouraging him. Our canine performer acknowledged their applause by wagging his tail, and barking at

the band. They speedily fled, the curtain descending to shouts of laughter, and 'Go it, Bob!'

HEREFORD RACE WEEK.—Country *en fête!* Crowded houses assembled to witness our performances. Our party consisted of Mrs. Waylett, the Leclerc family, Wright, Paul Bedford, Alexander Lee and myself. Assize Week followed. Serjeant (afterwards Judge) Talfourd helped us greatly. The bar, witnesses, plaintiffs, and defendants, impartially patronised us. Garrick, be it remembered, was born at Hereford.

LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE.—Arriving late in the evening at dark, I had to play in the after-piece. Our coach from London stopped at the 'Crown Inn.' Inquiring of the landlady my way to the theatre, she asked if I had been in the town before? My reply, 'No.'

'Then, sir, you would never find our tumble-down old theatre; it is in a bye-lane up a stable-yard.' Ringing a bell, the ostler appears. 'Light your lantern, Jim, and show this gentleman the way to the playhouse.'

'I wool, missus. Muster Cowper's players begins to-night.'

Aided by the friendly lantern, I reached 'Muster' Cowper's theatre in time to play in a farce, 'Murder and Mystery.' Ostler Jim insisted on waiting to see me back to the 'Crown.' In this hole of a building, Lord Foley, Sir Edward Standish, and Earl Somers gave bespeaks and patronage.

ADELPHI, 1841.—'The Rhine,' imported by the aid of a Tank and New-River pipes, from Germany to the 'Strand.' 'Announcement: 'Real water. The Rhine flows into the Adelphi every night at eight o'clock.' In the bills a German title, trans-

lated into English, '*Tower of the Rhine.*' A rapid river calm as a duck-pond; a frowning castle perched on a steep rock; the home of one of those terrible robber-knights that in the good old days infested the Rhine, subsisting on the plunder and murder of unhappy wayfarers. Drama written expressly for the Tank (*à la* 'Crummles Pump' in 'Nicholas Nickleby'). Plot short and easily followed. Love, travelling out of the right path, the consequence of a too familiar servitor, pitched into the 'Rhine' (by moonlight, of course, for effect)—splashing and kicking in the water, to let the audience see that it was no sham! Sometimes the spray reached the Pittites. A faithful friend jumps into the river to rescue the page; two awful-looking guards throw themselves headlong into the troubled waters to drown the two first plungers. A desperate struggle ensues in the water, to the amazement and delight of

gallery, pit, and boxes. The bereaved daughter stabs her cruel papa. The page climbs to her bower window, having drowned the pursuers who would have drowned him if they could. Beautiful tableau of the lovers seen fondly embracing on the castle battlements. Moon beams full on their happy faces.

Lady Brougham came to see this water-wonder. Her husband followed her ladyship; just after the water-fight, entering the stage-door to cross to his box, he nearly walked into the tank. Starting back, the Lord Chancellor made use of a naughty word—'No, d—— if I do! tell Lady Brougham I came. (*To coachman*) Drive home!'

ADELPHI THEATRICAL MUTE.—Thrown out of his pantomimic employment by bad times, Carles tried many callings without effect; poverty clung to him. A

friendly undertaker offered him an opening in the 'mute' line. This was thankfully accepted by our friend Motley. His first black job happened to be a funeral in Clerkenwell, at a baker's, on a cold snowy morning. After a slender breakfast, Carles and a regular mourner mounted guard at the baker's door. After an hour's duty, Carles, growing desperately cold and hungry, rang the baker's bell. Down came a servant-girl.

'Well!'

'Good luck to you; give us a drop of something hot, my dear.'

'Well, I'm sure, here's *imperance*,' slamming the door in our *ci-devant* clown's face.

Presently out came the baker himself in a towering passion.

'Which of you chaps asked my girl for——'

'A drop of some'at hot? I did, guvnor;

try how you like standing here, nursing this black thing,' holding up the crape staff.

Slam goes the door again. Driven to despair, to divert his mind he whistled 'Tippit-te-witch-it,' doing a bit of break-down. This attracted the notice of an errand-boy; in an instant he recognised our Adelphi clown.

'Oh, crikey! here's Carles playing a mute.'

'Go away, there's a good boy. I'm somebody else now.'

Not a step did the urchin budge, but laughingly called out for a tumble. Others gathered round the terrified mute. The fun increased; loud applause and shouts of 'Bravo, Harry!' Carles took to his heels, followed by his tormentors, leaving the baker to bury his better-half himself.

ACTING AT THE WHITE LION, KIDDER-

MINSTER.—Mrs. Waylett, Wright, Bedford, Lee and myself played to good audiences in the assembly-room. One night, after the performance, an alarm of fire awoke the 'Lion' and its 'cubs,' bringing all the terrified inmates out in their night-gear—men, women and children. Paul Bedford rushed out with a water-bottle; Wright tumbled literally downstairs; Mrs. Waylett fainted in Lee's arms; her old aunt tried to perform the same experiment in mine, but I ungallantly let her drop. The confusion and terror reached fever-heat. What was it all about? Nothing. It proved to be after all a false alarm. The night porter had dropped asleep; one of the commercial 'gents,' finding himself shut out, very naturally knocked and rang to obtain admission, and failing in this he tried crying 'Fire!' at the top of his voice, and so succeeded at last in rousing the porter and the house.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON.—Pretty theatre in the 'Falcon' Garden. We did well here for two nights.

WARWICK RACE WEEK.—A seedy neglected theatre, evidently seldom used. With our entertainments, it proved attractive. A silly fracas was caused by Mrs. Waylett's name not being printed large enough in the bills. I was the culprit, and Lee, her champion, challenged me to fight a duel. By Wright's persuasion I accepted the challenge. Paul Bedford was Lee's second, and Wright mine. Pistols were borrowed, but not loaded. Paul asked Lee to make his will before he went on the ground—a marshy field in the outskirts of the town. We met at six o'clock in the morning. The ground having been measured and our places taken, Wright gave the signal to fire. Bang went the powder—down fell both our seconds as if mortally

wounded. This caused a hearty laugh, a general shaking of hands, immediate return to Warwick, and a jolly breakfast at the combatants' expense.

CHAPTER VIII.

Worcester—Manager Bennett—Mrs. Gummage—The Jackmans at Northampton—Clarionet Band, Warwick — Macready and the Mop — The 'Custos Morum' of Romford—Walmer—The Duke's Head-Gardener—Sheridan Knowles—Letter from him to the Author—The Owls' Nest—The Cheap Jack and the Plush Waistcoat—Curious Instance of absence of mind—Miss Sarah Cushman—The real and the sham Sailors.

WORCESTER, MANAGER BENNETT.—This versatile man did everything himself, assisted by an old party styled Mrs. Gummage, never seen in summer or winter without pattens. Bennett commenced theatrical life with a puppet-show—saved upon that; started a theatre; acted all the best parts himself, in Worcester, Coventry, Shrews-

bury, etc., and prospered. His travelling-boxes formed city and castle walls (painted stone); chairs became stools by removing their backs; helmets, canvas folded up, and a cork put in the crown for feathers to stick in. Every property corresponded in its double or treble utility. If by chance Bennett employed a scene-painter (a rare chance it was), he filled up the artist's leisure hours at his own dwelling. Tables were transmogrified into highly-coloured flower-beds; cupboards, cornices, etc., by the painter's skill became iron safes or jewelled caskets, and ceilings azure blue covered with roses. Illustrations from Shakespeare, history, and the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' adorned the walls of every chamber. But his kitchen was the masterpiece of artful deception — sides of bacon, hams, hung beef, dangled, garnishing the walls. One room, sacred to privacy, he named Temple of Venus. Two old ladies (the Misses

James) presided over this pictorial abode, utilising their evenings by taking money at the theatre; Mrs. Gummage attending to the lights (oil-lamps), and keeping an eye on noisy half-price boys, etc. In the day-time she cooked and cleaned up at home. Old 'Gummy' was a special favourite with gallery customers: Bennett's band — a leader, violin, French horn, drum—all the rest young shopmen leaving early to play. This naturally produced discord; they never played at follow my leader. Bennett dressed splendidly by day, workman-like by night, always avoiding the principal streets on his way to the theatre. He died a churchwarden, respected and rich!

NORTHAMPTON, 1827.—All the players but two were 'Jackmans.' The family wrote plays, acted the best parts, delivered bills, painted scenery, in fact did all and everything. Jackman *père* played principal characters, to the great delight of the fol-

lowers of St. Crispin ; Northampton's staple being shoemaking. In 'Jobson and Nell' (a cobbler and his wife), when Jobson beat his turbulent wife with his strap, the 'gods' in the gallery applauded approvingly; it touched their feelings in reality. On one occasion, Cobbler Jobson had forgotten his strap, Nell's tongue going nineteen to the dozen ; a long pause. An observant cordwainer jumped up in the gallery, calling out :

'Here, Master Jackman, take mine ; leather her with this' (*throwing a strap on the stage*).

CLARIONET BAND, WARWICK.—Assize week, London company. When we arrived, all the musicians were engaged—for balls, fêtes, etc. ; not a fiddle to be had ; what could be done ? I was helped out of this dilemma by a friendly citizen suggesting a blind clarionet-player, living in the town,

and known as 'Wandering Bob.' Forthwith I availed myself of Bob's services, and placed him in the orchestra. He played on his cracked instrument right heartily, blowing away irrespective of the actors' dialogue, to the profound gratification of our visitors. Many gentlemen of the bar came after dinner to see some of their London favourites, Mdlle. Jenny Prosper, a French actress, one of the number; her pretty songs 'Bob' accompanied willy-nilly with 'Wapping Old Stairs,' 'Sally in Our Alley,' making his old clarionet screech again. This set Queen's Counsel and learned barristers mad with laughter; cruelly they insisted on an encore; then 'Bob' struck up 'The Roast Beef of Old England.' I had some excellent dancers in my troupe, totally useless without music; Bob supplied this loss by 'Twenty-four Tailors all in a Row.' Soliciting a 'bespeak' from the judge, Sir

James Parke, and the Bar, Mr. Chandos Leigh, the High Sheriff, kindly asked Sir James, promising on my part an efficient band from Birmingham.

'No, no, Leigh,' laughing, said Sir James; 'we'll have nothing but "Bob" and his clarionet. I've heard all about it; capital fun.'

On the night of 'bespeak,' blind Bob outdid himself, to the uproarious merriment of a crowded house, the learned judge included.

MACREADY AND THE MOP, NOTTINGHAM.—The eminent tragedian opened in 'Lear;' our property-man received his plot for the play in the usual manner, a map being required among the many articles (map highly necessary for Lear to divide his kingdom). The property-man being illiterate, read 'mop' for '*map*.' At night the tragedy commences; Macready

in full state on his throne calls for his map, a 'super' noble, kneeling, presents the aged king a white curly mop. The astounded actor rushed off the stage, dragging the unfortunate nobleman and his mop with him, actors and audience wild with delight.

ROMFORD, ESSEX.—Applying to a local magistrate for permission to perform a few nights in the Town Hall during a London vacation, the ruling Dogberry met my humble request in this fashion:

'What, sir! bring your beggarly actors into this town to demoralise the people? No, sir; I'll have no such profligacy in Romford: poor people shall not be wheedled out of their money by your tomfooleries. The first player that comes here I'll clap him in the stocks as a rogue and vagabond. Good-morning, sir,' motioning his servant to usher me out.

Essex always had a reputation for producing 'calves;' here I found one to my heart's content.

WALMER ASSEMBLY ROOM. WELLINGTON, LORD WARDEN.—Walmer Castle was a favourite residence of the great Duke's; it was there that he died. I wanted his patronage, which an introduction from Lord William Lennox would have secured. Unfortunately the Duke was in London. The gate-keeper—an old Coldstream Guardsman—kindly asked me to sit down in his 'natty' lodge. We had a chat, the soldier telling me how he came there as head-gardener and gate-keeper. When the Duke became Lord Warden, he proposed the situation to the Guardsman, a favourite. Sergeant Adams bluntly told his Grace:

'I can't take it; don't know a rose from a cabbage—never was in a garden.'

'What's that to do with it, man?' replied Wellington; 'you can get some one to help you that does understand it—do it.'

The sergeant did, and a jolly life he found it—living in clover, well paid by visitors' offerings and good wages.

DOVER.—Charles Kean, William Farren, business good. Sheridan Knowles played in his own 'William Tell.' Jolly Sheridan was the essence of good-humour and wit; his sole weakness was the amiable one of an attachment to an extra festive glass or two. He occupied numerous chairs at merry meetings, clubs named after various *fishes, beasts, and fowls of the air.* Among the number one called 'The Owls,' held at the 'Falstaff,' opposite Drury Lane Theatre. I, for a time, at his suggestion, perched in the Owls' nest.

The following is a reminder which Knowles sent me of an Owls' gathering:

'DEAR STIRLING,

'Come to our Nest next Tuesday; I shall mount my perch at nine sharp. All our old Owls and several unfledged Owlets will be there. Jolly whooping, and woo-woo-ing, depend. Did you get my father's dictionary? I left it at the Adelphi for you. Dad's work is well done and cheap—six shillings and sixpence. Remember Tuesday; "we fly by night."

'Yours, my boy, truly,

'SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

'Owl's Nest, Anno Domini, 1847.

'P.S.—Nine, Tuesday—woo-woo.'

SHEFFIELD FAIR WEEK.—My name announced at the Prince's Theatre, to act in my own pieces, 'Rag-Picker of Paris,' 'Raby Ratler,' etc. When I arrived in the Cutlers' town, I found the Prince's closed, and the manager flown. Strolling

through the fair—a very Babel of sounds unearthly—I came upon a pitch of cheap-Jacks and their wares displayed in a line of carts, forming a small street. Jacks and Gills, eloquent and pressing, *gave* articles away, so they led one to infer—'saws that could work without hands,' so sharp were they. One buxom seller of the fair sex informed us that their teeth, when used up, would supply our dental defects in old age. One sharp Jack dealt largely in tailoring-cords, navvies' jackets, colliers' frocks—nothing but the very best West-of-England cloth and London fashion. He, Jack, dealt only in nobleman's misfits, hard-up swells' 'toggery' his chief attraction. Among other wonders of his stock-in-trade was a large yellow plush waistcoat, with double rows of mother-of-pearl buttons, large as crown-pieces. Holding this startling vest up aloft with a triumphant cry:

'Here! here! here! Lads, look at it;

don't it make your two eyes water?'—(*turning it round*)—'here—look inside, outside, all sides—here's workmanship, good as Rodgers's best cutlery—a stunner—real silk-plush, yellerer than a new guinea!—pearls, thick as plums in a pudden—cool in summer, save blankets in winter! Why, the ugliest chap in the fair would look 'ansom' in it—all the gals 'ud run arter this waistcoat; it's going for nothing, or next door to it. When you're done with it, cut it up for your first lad's Sunday breeches' (*loud shouting*). 'Ah, that tickled you, did it? Who'll have it?' (A HUNDRED VOICES: '*I, I, I!*') 'Stop a bit, it won't fit you all—going, going for a pound.' ('*Oh, oh, oh!*' from the mob). 'Oh, oh! that's too little—eh, lads? Nineteen—eighteen—seventeen—sixteen—fifteen—fourteen shillings. Will that do for you? Come, say ten bob and a kick'—(sixpence)—(*a pause*). 'No bid?—come, I'll let you into

a secret. This 'ere waistcoat was made for Prince Halbert himself'—(*crowd laugh*). 'My first cousin, a tailor up in Lunnon, made it to the prince's horder; took it home to Windsor Castle late one Saturday night, knowing Royal Halbert wanted it to go to church with next day, Sunday, with the Queen—bless her! Dick got down late from Lunnon; Halbert was in bed; none of the *riyal* servants *du'st* wake him. "Leave it," says Johnny. "Valker!" says Dick. Back he walked with the garment like a fool; and he sold it to me a bargain. Won't you 'ave Prince Halbert's own?—ten — nine—eight — seven-and-sixpence—no less. Say six bob. No bidders? I'll sarve you all out—wear it myself. Mother' (*to his wife*) 'bring 'em out some files—they're deep enough!'

MACREADY'S FAREWELL, BRIGHTON.—'Macbeth.' I acted in the last piece, my

writing—'Anchor of Hope'—or rather ought to have done so; but, strolling on the beach, I forgot the time. A farce was substituted, and I was politely told to go.

MISS SARAH CUSHMAN (American actress) played with me at the Surrey in the part of Romeo; I played Mercutio; and her sister, Juliet. She was descended from Robert Cushman, one of the Pilgrim Fathers, who landed from the *May Flower* at Boston. Sarah Cushman was a native of Boston, where she was born in 1816. Her American career had been brilliant; for years she was admitted to be the leading native actress. She offered her services to me at Covent Garden for eight pounds per week, to open in 'Fazio,' as Bianca. This modest proposal Laurent, the manager, refused, and Miss Cushman found a home at the Princess's. Maddox gave her twenty pounds a week, and

cleared five thousand pounds by her talent. She retired on an ample fortune; dying in America, regretted and admired by all who knew her.

LIVERPOOL AMPHITHEATRE, forty-five years ago.—Playing a popular drama, entitled 'El Hyder, Chief of the Gaunt Mountains,' a famous old Cobourg favourite, written by W. Barrymore; my *rôle* a British tar, one of the old school, who only had to look at a Frenchman on the stage to frighten him into fits. Turks or niggers collapsed at the very sound of his 'Shiver my timbers!' 'Britons never will be slaves!' or 'Come on, you lubbers!' Tom encounters a party of the enemy in a rocky defile; nothing daunted, at them he goes; a desperate combat of eight—seven to one; awful struggle! yet, strange to relate, no one appeared killed or wounded. During the *mêlée*, a real sailor,

half-seas-over, slid down the gallery and box pillars, jumped into the circus, climbing over double-basses, fiddlers, French horns, and reached the scene of action on the stage, placing himself by my side, threw down his jacket, calling out, 'Messmate, I'll stand by you; seven to one ain't fair noways. Pour a broadside into the blackamoor lubbers. Hurrah!' he knocked two down, the others wisely taking to their heels. Cheered by the house, Jack Tar No. 1 left the boards with Jack Tar No. 2, glad to get rid of him.

CHAPTER IX.

Madame Sala and the Duke of Wellington—Manager Maddox and 'Wild Ducks'—Mark Lemon and *Punch*—Moncrieff's 'Cataract of the Ganges'—Worthing — Thornton — George III. and his favourite actor, Cobham — Comical vagaries of Archer, an actor — The Worthing 'Figaro' and the Scholars of Dotheboys Hall—With Robertson at Leicester and Sheffield—Tom Robertson—Two letters from T. W. R.—Ingenious ruse of Huntley May, a Hibernian manager—A Fête interrupted by the falling-in of the Roof—Jeannette and Jeannot —Haynes Bayley, his Musical Comedietta 'Light as Air'—His letter to the Author.

MADAME SALA AND THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.—Madame Sala, an excellent singer and teacher of music, had been engaged to teach the Ladies Pierrepont, nieces to the great Duke. A long lesson, given on a very hot July day, exhausted Madame so

much that she was compelled to hurry into a tavern in Brook-street, on her way home, to take a glass of ale. Leaving the house hastily, she ran against Wellington, who was passing: dreadfully alarmed, she exclaimed:

'Your Grace, I know you saw me come out, but I could not help it, upon my word: I was so thirsty.'

The Duke, smiling: 'My dear madame, if I had been in your position, I should have done the same; quite right. Good-morning, madame.'

MANAGER MADDOX AND 'WILD DUCKS.'—'Wild Ducks,' a farce of my writing, was offered to the shrewd director of the Princess's. Having read it—'Well, my boy, what's the price?—mind, a low figure.' My rejoinder: 'What will you give?' Manager: 'Five pounds—no—well, six!' 'Can't take it, sir.' 'Seven—pay you at once, mind.' 'It is worth much more,' thanking him for

his offer, and preparing to quit his room. 'Stop, I'll give eight pounds—not a farthing more.' 'Good-day, sir; I must try another market for my Ducks.' 'What! refuse ready money? why you must be a Rothschild. Keep your Ducks, if you won't have my stuffing. Good-day.'*

MARK LEMON, editor of *Punch*, was a clever author and a kindly man. The idea of this world-renowned periodical emanated from Douglas Jerrold. He wrote and published three numbers of a halfpenny *Punch*, during the time that he worked at Duncombe's Printing Office, Queen-street,

* Maddox was much addicted to wearing jewellery and fine clothes, and paid special attention to his shining boots. An actor in his company eclipsed him in polish: this vexed Maddox. What could be the secret? Resolved to discover it, he searched the dressing-room. In the actor's place, he found a bottle of patent polish. Delighted Maddox:—'This is it, eh? Wasteful extravagance! he gets too much salary. I'll stop it'—polishing his own boots. 'There, I've saved twopence to-day, and reduced a salary.'

Holborn. But the venture was unsuccessful for the nonce. The first staff of *Punch*, when at last it was fairly started, consisted of Mark Lemon, Gilbert Abbott a-Beckett, Stirling Coyne, Douglas Jerrold, Landells (a printer and wood-engraver), and Horace Mayhew. These were the original projectors of *Punch*, and they were speedily reinforced by Albert Smith, Leech, Doyle, Thackeray, and others. Mark Lemon's first start in life was with an uncle of his, a brewer. Disliking business, however, he tried his hand at dramatic composition, his first venture being a piece called 'The Avenger,' produced with my version of 'Pickwick' at a new Theatre in Norton Folgate, Bishopsgate-street, in the City of London, on the opening night, April 27th, 1837. Encouraged by success, Mark's pen furnished pieces to all the best London theatres for many years. Marrying Miss Romer, an actress, he settled down in the

'Shakespeare's Head,' a tavern in Wych-street, Strand. This became head-quarters for poets, players, painters, and press-men—a rare assemblage of wit and humour met in good fellowship nightly at the 'Shakespeare's Head.' Mark's bland manner and hearty welcome to all comers made his house popular; money realised by his connexion with *Punch* enabled him to quit business and devote himself entirely to literature. With Dickens he carried the 'Art Guild' prosperously through, although its object failed in spite of its being aided by such men as Lord Lytton, Dickens, Lemon, John Forster, Wilkie Collins, Jerrold, F. Yates, and Hood. His Lectures on Falstaff; London; Acting—were all more or less clever and attractive. One of his most telling pieces was originally played at the Olympic, 'The Ladies Club:' the chair occupied by Mrs. Glover—the members, a bevy of well-known actresses. Lemon died

in harness, his active brain could not rust in idleness. The 'Shakespeare's Head' stood near those famous Elizabethan taverns—the 'Devil,' and the 'Mermaid.' Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Herrick, Sir Walter Raleigh, the Earls of Essex and Southampton, Greene, Marlowe, Burbage, Spenser, Peele, and a host of actors, wits, and poets, met to enjoy a social glass, and to taste Raleigh's newly-imported Virginia weed, brought by him from far over seas. Our early navigators were boon companions at these jolly meetings held in the street of 'Flete;' Drake, Gilbert, Frobisher, with tales of storm and wreck, Spanish towns sacked, fleets destroyed, pouches well-filled with Spanish dollars of the 'Don,' to be spent in good fellowship at the 'Mermaid,' or with the 'Devil.'

CATARACT OF THE GANGES, DRURY LANE.—Produced by Elliston, written by Moncrieff,

touched up by Reynolds; finally George Colman had a finger in the pie. Moncrieff was greatly vexed with this interference. Some one addressing him at a rehearsal as Mr. Moncrieff, he angrily replied:

'My name is not Moncrieff, sir; I am Susannah between the two elders.'

WORTHING, SUSSEX, 1843.—A highly-proper seaside resort was quiet Worthing, renowned for dulness, health, and rigid propriety. Loose fish found little encouragement here. Bijou Theatre; owner, a justice of the peace, 'with eyes severe and beard of formal cut,'—Thornton, a self-raised man by marriage; his plastic tongue wooed and won an ancient widow, titled and rich, no children; thus a poor country manager drew a prize in the matrimonial lottery—Motley became a rich man. In Richard Thornton's early days King George III. patronised him liberally

at Windsor; the good-natured monarch delighted in plays, frequently selecting his favourites in the Windsor Theatre to play particular characters. Cobham ranked high in royal estimation: a capital performer in everything, a good singer and an expert dancer. If his name happened to be out of the bill, Thornton was sent for to the Castle.

KING: 'Eh, eh, Thornton! how, how is this? Why leave Cobham out?'

MANAGER: 'Your Majesty, there is nothing in the piece for Mr. Cobham to do.'

GEORGE: 'Nothing to do, man? Here's an old woman, let him do that; must have him in when I come. Yes, yes'—*laughing*—'ha, ha! he'll look well in petticoats; ha, ha! Charlotte' [the queen] will enjoy it too, yes.'

On another occasion, 'Rosina,' a ballad opera, was selected by the king. The lady

vocalist was suddenly taken ill. What was to be done? George again settled the difficulty.

'Cobham—let him sing the music at the wing. I can always hear him.'

It was so: a lady spoke the words, Cobham sang the music, every note, the king encoring and laughing heartily.

I took the Worthing Theatre for six weeks for Henry Spicer, and engaged a good company, Archer of Drury Lane being the leading man. Unfortunately he drank too much. He sent his wife and children on in advance to 'pickle' themselves (such was his expression), a week before he came. Archer's pockets were ever scantily filled with coin; when he reached Brighton, per rail, the supplies were exhausted, and the poor player had to trudge on to Worthing under a burning hot sun and along dusty roads; add to

this a large brown-paper parcel, containing his 'props' (wigs, collars, boots, etc.). He had lost his wife's address, and to crown his troubles, all the public-houses were closed. His first misadventure was at a turnpike, two or three miles from Worthing. Hearing a loud knocking and bawling, the pike-man, rushing out, asked him what he wanted.

'My wife, kids, and a drink.

The indignant and irate gate-keeper slammed the door in his face, muttering 'Fool!' as he did so. To make matters worse, down went his 'props,' bursting their paper covering. Swearing, stuffing his wigs, tights, etc., in his pockets, our unfortunate actor resumed his way. It was church-time, and everything was quiet; not a soul was to be seen in the streets. Tom found himself in an open space, under a large lamp, mounted on steps, just opposite a church. He sat down grumbling, de-

ploring his lost family, and by degrees dropped into a doze. With his 'props' peeping out of their hiding-places, he presented a somewhat startling figure. Service over, the square was filled with worshippers returning homewards. The noise awoke Archer. Up he sprang, and addressed the astonished people as follows :

'Romans, countrymen, and lovers, don't stare; I'm Tom Archer, from Drury Lane, come here to astonish you. See me act hump-backed Dick. Where's my wife, partner of all my joys? Let me catch her, lewd minx. Lend me a horse, I'll ride to———'

A crowd surrounded the madman, a constable was sent for, and Archer shut up with his 'props' in the lock-up, protesting by Magna Charta, and all the Acts of Parliament, that he would ruin Worthing for this. Thornton, the local magistrate, liberated him with a caution to mind here-

after what he was about; and Mrs. Archer led him home pacified, his 'props' included.

For my benefit 'Nicholas Nickleby' was announced. Without the 'Dotheboys-Hall' scholars, this performance could not, however, take place. And here was the awkward dilemma. Worthing mothers of the poorer class did not countenance play-acting, believing Old Nick to be in some way connected with it. A local Figaro helped me out of my difficulty. This professor of the razor did a bit of most things at his odd and leisure moments. He was a performer on the French horn, a bird-fancier, newsvendor, corn-cutter—heaven knows what besides—a regular Caleb Quotem, in short. "I'll get you fifty, sir, never fear.' And he was as good as his word. Lured from the by-streets and alleys by his horn, like the children in the 'Pied Piper of Hamelin,

the small fry followed him to the theatre yard; once there, Figaro closed the gates upon Mr. Squeers's pupils. Amidst crying and moaning they were placed on the stage, sitting on benches, and kept in order by Figaro's cane—poor children, completely bewildered. When the treacle was administered, most of them cried. This delighted the audience, thinking it so natural (so it was). At nine o'clock, the act over, our cruel barber threw open the gates, driving his flock out, with a pleasant intimation of what they would catch when they arrived home. Mothers, fathers, sisters, in wild disorder, had been scouring the town for their runaways, and the police were completely puzzled, and at their wits' end, at such a wholesale kidnapping. Figaro was nearly torn to pieces when the *ruse* was discovered.

With Robertson at Leicester and Shef-

field I played in my own pieces, 'The Ragpicker of Paris,' and 'The Wandering Jew.' At Sheffield my benefit was to be half the receipts of the night. Mrs. Robertson kindly invited me one evening to tea in a family way. Very pleasant it was—a multitude of little ones, a baby in arms, Master Tom, then about twelve years old, and so on, up and down—a large family. The repast over, Mr. Robertson quitted the room with all his children, leaving the baby, Mrs. R., and myself, *tête-à-tête.* She could talk, as will be seen. She painted a mournful picture of bad business, expenses of a home (this I believed), difficulty in paying the actors, and winding up with many anticipatory compliments on my kindness of heart (heavens! what for?), she asked me to leave my half due to me for the benefit in their hands until the following week, when Robertson would send it to me, after his

own benefit had taken place. This concession would save them from ruin. Who could withstand such an appeal from a handsome woman and a smiling baby? I consented, and after receiving a shower of thanks, returned to town, minus £18 10*s*. Next week came, followed by another, but no tidings from Sheffield. I wrote to Robertson. His son Tom, afterwards the famous author of 'Caste,' answered for his father:

'Sheffield, October 2nd, 1846.

'DEAR SIR,

'My father regrets that he could not keep his promise, but his benefit did not turn out as well as he anticipated. His friend the sergeant-major brought the soldiers, but he was obliged to trust them for admission. He now finds great difficulty in getting the money. In a few days

father will send it. With grateful thanks, mother's best regards, and all.

'Yours, etc.,

'TOM ROBERTSON.

'E. Stirling, Esq.,

'Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.'

This was pleasant. Weeks quickly passed over. At last I wrote to Sheffield another reminder for my cash. The reply was from Tom, junior, again :

'Sheffield, Nov. 10th, 1846.

'DEAR SIR,

'Father desires me to say, that he is in so much distress that he cannot at present send you a shilling—in fact he is giving up management to take a situation. The sergeant-major never paid the soldiers' money!—Mother is greatly grieved about it, and wishes to know if you will take the

money out in knives and spoons ? A friend of hers would send them to you.

'Yours obediently, sir,

'TOM ROBERTSON.

'E. Stirling, Esq.,

'T. R. C. Garden.'

In a mercantile point of view, knives and spoons were better than nothing. But I thought it best to abandon the matter, leaving the manager and 'sergeant-major' (who had sailed with his regiment for foreign parts) to settle the matter between them. Moral—Never listen to a pretty woman's pleadings with a very pretty baby in her arms.

EXETER (Huntley May).—An Hibernian of the first water—a Tipperary boy. This man was the incarnation of deception ; part of his daily occupation was to issue bills of large dimensions, with most attrac-

tive pieces never to be performed. At last the people became restive, demanding their money back. One night they threatened to pull up the benches; May, quite equal to the emergency, rushed on the stage in his shirt-sleeves:

'What's up now, boys?'

'Money, money, swindle!'

'Hark at 'em now! Murder and Moses, there's broth of boys for ye!—money's just what I want myself!' (*Mournfully*) 'Think of your cathedral ground: who lies in it? My sainted wife, Norah; poor sould! she loved Exeter so that she would come here to be buried among ye. We all love ye, myself, and little Pat. Aisy now, I'll give you a trate! To-morrow night's my benefit—make me a thumping house; Norah won't forget you in heaven. Behave like gentlemen—come early to-morrow night, good-luck to ye!' Exit manager; re-enters, carrying a towel. 'Boys, don't cry

after poor Norah; enjoy yourselves; leave all the crying to myself—Och a hone a ree!'

MRS. DAVIDGE—*Surrey Theatre en fête.* —A droll circumstance, connected with a garden ball which took place in a long space inclosed by walls. This the theatrical employés speedily converted into a ball-room superbly decorated with flowers, painting, chandeliers, and with a roof of canvas stretched on rafters from wall to wall. A numerous company were assembled; the orchestra included Balfe and Vincent Wallace. All were very jolly and festive; everything went happily and joyously as wedding-bells, when suddenly ensued consternation, fright, faintings, and tableau of horror! The roof fell in, with its chandeliers and floral offerings, and a page from next door dropped upon the affrighted guests. Buttons had inquisitively climbed

on to the roof to peep at their 'goings on,' was the cook's explanation. Albert Smith, one of the visitors, used this incident in his 'Ledbury Papers.'

STRAND THEATRE.—Hooper, manager. —I wrote a musical drama, 'Jeannette and Jeannot,' founded on the popular ballad of that name; Compton and Miss Rebecca Isaacs acted and sang in the piece.

When Mrs. Honey managed the City of London Theatre, or rather when I managed it for her, Haynes Bayley wrote a musical comedietta for the lady, entitled 'Light as Air;' lively and sparkling, and withal somewhat too refined for the East-end of London forty years ago. At that period they had not been accustomed to genteel comedy—startling, sensational dramas formed their usual entertainment. The following is a letter I received from the clever poet:

'Dorset Square, May 6, 1838.

'DEAR STIRLING,

'Will you kindly tell Mrs. Honey that she shall have the words of her two ballads to-morrow? If you will call rehearsal at eleven, I will be with you. I fancy the piece will go well. Of one thing I am assured, that it will not be your fault if it does not. "Light as Air" will not be treated as "a trifle" by Edward Stirling.

'Yours most faithfully,

'HAYNES BAYLEY.'

CHAPTER X.

Frederick Yates—Yates and Napoleon—Jock Wilson and the 'Shipwreck of the *Medusa*'—'I'd be a Butterfly—Scotch Actor and his Stick—Covent Garden with Laurent—The Author's adaptation of 'Pickwick—Bath—Liverpool—The Irish Exponent of Tableaux from the Antique—Yates and his Company at Glocester—A Staffordshire 'Mrs. Malaprop'—Olympic Theatre burnt—Cheltenham—Royal Assembly Rooms—The 'Berkeley Hunt'—The Fair One with the Golden Locks—The Author's Benefit at the Victoria Theatre, 1841—Yates and his Nautch Girls at the Adelphi.

FREDERICK YATES, actor and manager, was one of the most versatile actors that ever trod the boards. Tragedy, comedy, farce, burlesque—everything Yates personated was well done, many perfectly. This talented man, educated at the Charter House, had for his school-mates Thackeray

and General Havelock. He entered the army, and he was afterwards laughingly wont to say, 'I served under Wellington, not at the battle of Waterloo, but in Paris, after it.' Yates speedily quitted military life; promotion came too slowly in those days of patronage for our clever artiste. He tried the stage; opened at Edinburgh as Shylock in the 'Merchant of Venice,' and played a round of leading characters so satisfactorily that Kemble at once engaged the new actor for Covent Garden. His first appearance in London was in the part of Richard the Third; Iago, Hamlet, etc., followed. Eventually he deserted the tragic muse for comedy; here he was thoroughly at home—Charles Surface, Copper Captain, Doricourt, etc., being some of his principal characters. A part — Count Carmen— in a new play, 'Pride shall have a Fall,' completely established his supremacy as a light comedian. This was the part of a

foppish cornet, a satire on the officers of the 10th Lancers; this regiment being quartered at Brighton, at a ball the officers refused to dance, one of the noodles (a cornet) drawling out, 'The Tenth don't dance!' This effusion of stupidity became the joke of the day. Yates hit the public taste by a capital imitation. Uniting with Terry he settled at the Adelphi in management, Sir Walter Scott lending his friend Terry ten thousand pounds, unfortunately to be lost. With the best of acting and the best of pieces and in spite of unremitting industry, the venture, sad to record, resulted in failure. Terry retired, to be succeeded by the elder Mathews. This venture also turned out badly: a third partner, Gladstone (not connected with the member for Mid-Lothian), bought himself *in* and Yates *out*. The power of changing voice and feature that our popular favourite possessed, amounted to the marvellous.

In his solo entertainments he would talk to his audience as manager Yates ; turning up the stage, by altering his hair he presented himself to the wondering lookers-on as Braham, or Kemble—such were his facial resources. Generous to a degree, although his whole attention was engrossed by the Adelphi, and notwithstanding the production of many first-rate dramas by Buckstone, Poole, Jerrold ; actors of fame, T. P. Cooke, Wrench, Paul Bedford, John Reeve, Buckstone, Wright, Power (*Rory-o'-More*), Wilkinson, Mrs. Yates, Honey, Keeley, Fitzwilliam, Fortescue, Miss Kelly, Mrs. Stirling, and himself, he left the Adelphi without a shilling. This is a notable instance of fickle Fortune's freaks. Another man (Gladstone) took the reins, and by sheer luck made money. My 'Bohemians,' 'Miser's Daughter,' and 'Christmas Carol' helped him to do this. The stage I managed for some years. Yates out of

harness quickly died. His death was caused by an old rupture of a blood-vessel in the throat; all that is left of this kindly man and incomparable performer lies in the vaults of St. Martin's-le-Grand.

YATES AND NAPOLEON (not at St. Helena). Atkins, Zoological Gardens, Liverpool.—The Adelphi season over for the six months from November until Easter. Yates generally gave fêtes. His company, and any monstrosity that could be procured to attract, for large provincial towns. A French mechanic persuaded Yates that he had constructed a gigantic figure of Napoleon, painted in the habit that he wore living. This figure, inflated by gas, was to ascend perpendicularly into the air at a signal. Here was a chance for the clever manager. The exiled hero just dead, his glorious deeds fresh in the public mind. He arranged with Monsieur Antoine instanter. A massive canvas tomb, erected on a rocky

island in a muddy pond, pelicans, swans, and wild-fowl, tricoloured flag, old guard, twelve pensioners in real French uniforms, everything to do honour to the illustrious dead (painted fish-skin). I suggested that one of Atkins's tame eagles should be chained to the rock, emblematic of the Emperor's captivity. This was done, much to the discomfort of the kingly bird (several times he attempted suicide, trying to hang himself by the leg). Fête-day fixed, colossal posters invited the Liverpool public to witness this novelty. Untoward rain came down for three successive appointed days. The old guard grew tired of smoking short pipes, the eagle screamed awfully, the disturbed pelicans, etc., deserted their home—save one grave bird; he revenged himself by swallowing a large paintbrush left on the island. The sun consented to show himself on the fourth day (Monday). The

gardens were thronged with people, and the place was equally crowded outside. There was a discharge of artillery at nine (hour of ascension), great excitement inside and out; drums beat to arms, old guard fall in; red fire; cannon; drums; screeches of terror-stricken birds; roars of animals; hurrahs outside from the mob; tomb bursts its marble (canvas) walls; flight of skyrockets — they *did* ascend; Napoleon did not. The Victor of Austerlitz refused to move. Monsieur Antoine was simply frantic; Yates terrified; visitors groaning 'Shame, shame! swindle!' etc.: outsiders yelling for 'Boney-party!' enlivened by showers of turf and bricks. This drove the 'old guard,' that never fled before, to run away through the muddy pond. All was confusion and despair. Hundreds of voices demanded their money back. At this juncture an idea struck me. I made Monsieur

Antoine tie the flabby Emperor by his cocked hat to a long pole, and hold him up to convince the people that he was really there. Shouts of derisive laughter rose when they saw the effigy of the Conqueror of Europe in fish-skin; the Frenchman had used bad gas, the figure was only half-filled; this caused the disaster. The money had to be returned, and the people gradually dispersed; the mob, grumbling, pelted everybody. Yates rushed home frantically to bed. Moon rose, banished pelicans returned placidly to their island home, Monsieur Antoine vanished to Paris or into the Seine.

SWANSEA.—An old actor in our company, Jock Wilson, whose memory was much impaired, had a small part in a new melodrama allotted to him. The few lines he had to speak ought to have been spoken at the opening of the Third Act.

He is discovered tied to a barrel, floating on the sea; his words run thus:

'For fifteen hours I have been floating on this dreadful sea, tossed to and fro,' etc.

Poor old man, his memory failed him (as it will fail us all sooner or later); music, thunder and lightning, calm.

VICTIM ON THE BARREL: 'For fifteen *years* I've been tied to this tub, tossed up and down by the relentless waves.'

A VOICE FROM GALLERY: 'Stop, stop, Mr. Wilson, look you; tap the tub and let's have a drink.'

This decided the career of our unfortunate drama, the 'Shipwreck of the Medusa.' Poor Wilson had repeated the speech of Reginald, an ancient prisoner in Earl Osmond's dungeons in Monk Lewis's 'Castle Spectre,' a popular drama once in town and country.

'I'D BE A BUTTERFLY, BORN IN A BOWER.'—

This very successful ballad—Alexander Lee, composer—owed its musical existence to chance. Lee and his brother, music-sellers and publishers in Regent-street, wanted something racy for the London season. Natural History had been exhausted for titles: puzzled which or what to select, a friend luckily proposed a butterfly's ephemeral existence. Lee saw it at once, and composed the music to Haynes Bayley's words: 'I'd be a butterfly born in a bower.' This happy idea cleared upwards of £1,000 (Lee's statement to myself), and turned the heads of half the young ladies in and out of London.

Scotch Actor and his Stick.—Macdonald, one of our actors in Bass's troupe, Dundee, always carried a large-sized bamboo cane, at all times his companion. We were crossing the river Tay in a ferry-boat from Dundee, careworn, hungry, and tired; no

money, salaries unpaid; yet Jemmy Macdonald seemed little to feel it. There came no repinings from him; this was a riddle to us starvelings. Aboard the boat he whispered to me: 'Laddie, come abaft.' *Sotto voce*, 'Not a word, laddie,' unscrewing his bamboo, the top a cup, the stick a whiskey bottle. 'Tak' a drink, laddie—real Glenlivat; nae exciese-man ever took gauge of this whiskey.' This I believe; it was I don't know what above proof. In the stick lay 'Jemmy's' hilarity. Doubtless many of us find comfort in the stick at times.

1844.—COVENT GARDEN with LAURENT, Manager of Her Majesty's Opera. Season rendered notable by the production of Sophocles' 'Antigone' for the first time on a European stage. Creon, Vandenhoff; Antigone, Miss Vandenhoff. This classical revival told well, attracting learned and unlearned alike. Sir Martin Archer Shee,

President of the Royal Academy, was pleased to praise my work in placing it on the stage. Talfourd's 'Ion,' with Master Betty. Rip-van-Winkle awoke from his Sleepy Hollow in the person of Hackett, a capital American actor. A five-act play 'Honesty,' written by Henry Spicer, and well acted by Vandenhoff, Wallack, J. Vining, Miss Vandenhoff, etc., a Chinese spectacle, and Nelson Lee's pantomime, 'Harlequin Quiver and Quaver,' brought Covent Garden to a close. Laurent did not venture again.

CITY OF LONDON THEATRE, built by Beasly, opened for the first time April 27th, 1837, with the original adaptation of the 'Pickwick Papers' by myself.

PICKWICK, *Williams* (of the Haymarket).
SAM WELLER, *Wilkinson* (Adelphi).
FAT BOY, *Tully* (composer).
JINGLE, *Fitzpatrick.*

Mark Lemon's drama, 'The Avenger,' concluded the night's entertainment.

BATH.—City of Thermal, wigs, brocades, stately peers, fair dames, waxlights and intrigue. Assembly-rooms, Beau Nash and high card-playing made Bath famous. It always ranked as the first of provincial theatres. London managers did not go to Bath to get their heads shaved, but to recruit their foremost talent for the metropolitan boards. Mrs. Siddons, Miss O'Neil, John Kemble, Quick, Elliston, Jones, Cooper, etc., came from the Somersetshire capital. My season, 1840, for Davidge paid well; a novel announcement for him, his first under his own management resulted in two thousand pounds loss.

AMPHITHEATRE, LIVERPOOL: CLASSICAL ORTHOGRAPHY.—A lessee of Sadler's Wells commenced his theatrical career on these

boards with me. At a local benefit, among many attractions, Tableaux from the Antique filled a large space. The statues were living models, the exponent to the public a gentleman from Dublin city, rich in brogue. First Tableau—'Ajax defying the lightning;' music. 1st Group—Exponent: 'A-Jack defying of the lightning.' 2nd Group—'Hercules killing the Nemean lion.' Exponent: 'Herclass killing a nameless lion' (considerable merriment in front, accompanied with my anger at the wing, telling the exponent to come off—not he!) 3rd Group—'Caius Marius sitting among the ruins of Carthage.' This was interpreted, 'Caus Morimes sitting on'—referring to the list—'I can't make out what he sat upon, bedad!' House in a roar, down came the curtain, away ran the exponent, I after him. Years after he became a London and provincial manager, aided by a clever wife, Miss Marriott, to help him.

GLOCESTER, YATES AND COMPANY, 1835. —We were acting in Cheltenham and tried a night with the Adelphi company in this fine old city. Much to our manager's chagrin, it failed; this annoyed him, but still more so at not being acknowledged when he came on the stage. Advancing towards the foot-lights he addressed his auditors as follows: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I am Frederick Yates. Possibly I may be unknown to you; in town, at my own theatre, they do recognise me; applause always accompanies my acting, in fact, it would be dull and vapid without; it is like salt to meat to an actor. The house to-night is badly supported—I am a loser; let me ask you to applaud and I will act, thus accommodating each other.' They clapped their hands at everyone and everything after this appeal.

STAFFORD.—Mrs. Smedley ruled the roast—verily Mr. Smedley's much better

half! This good lady out-malapropped Mrs. Malaprop herself. Being asked after her good man, she shook her head: 'He's been at his old tricks, too much yale; now he's laid by the heels, an *absence* [abscess] in his back.'

I commiserated him.

'Ah well,' observed Mrs. S., 'he bears it quiet enough; he's got *manured* [inured] to it.'

OLYMPIC (Spicer, manager) burnt, 1846; a gas-man's neglect caused this calamity. Gustavus Brooke appeared here in 'Othello'—his advent in London. Mrs. Mowatt and Davenport, American artists, made a highly favourable impression on the public by their excellent performances. The lady, an authoress of repute in the United States, produced several of her own plays.

CHELTENHAM, ROYAL ASSEMBLY ROOMS.

—The theatre burnt, then under the management of James Anderson and Penley. Boucicault was an actor in their company. A temporary theatre fitted up in a fine large room at the 'Plough' answered our purpose, highly patronised by the 'Berkeley Hunt.' A performance of Richard the Third was given at the Rooms.

CAST:

DUKE OF GLOSTER, *Colonel Charitie.*
RICHMOND, *Lord Seagrave.*
BUCKINGHAM, *Grantley Berkeley.*
KING HENRY, *Lord Ellenborough.*
TRESSEL, *Hon. F. Barrington.*
CATESBY, *Sir Harry Darrell.*
RATCLIFFE, *Mr. Stavely.*
NORFOLK, *Hon. Chandos Leigh.*
OXFORD, *Captain Hammersley.*
QUEEN ELIZABETH, *Mrs. Glover* (specially engaged).

LADY ANNE, *Miss Jackson.*
DUCHESS OF YORK, *Mrs. Chamberlain.*

FAIR ONE WITH THE GOLDEN LOCKS.—Miss Sally Booth, of Drury Lane, paid us a 'starring' visit at Stafford. Among the fair artiste's many requirements, a dressing-room to herself ranked first. Our small theatre could not furnish one: a long room sufficed for the ladies of our regular company. To accommodate fair Sally, this was made into two rooms, by simply putting up a canvas partition. One of the pieces selected by Miss Booth was 'The Romp.' She was famous in Priscilla Tomboy. At night shrill screams were heard in the star's dressing department.

'Jane, how can you be so careless? You've run the comb into my head.'

Ladies, on their side, a titter. Sally's hair was universally envied by her theatrical

sisters,—long flowing auburn locks; ill-nature said they were dyed. Repeated squeaks from Miss B., with:

'You hurt me, Jane. Oh, oh!'

One lady, inclined to be inquisitive, cut a slit in the canvas, through which she peeped, and saw her golden locks on a wig block and Sister Jane combing them; Miss B., perfectly *bald*, standing before a glass, colouring, at the other side of the room. A burst of laughter ensued from the delighted ladies. Miss Sally saw the hole in the canvas. Her secret was out—so was she, and Sister Jane. Next morning, by first coach, 'the Golden-haired Fair One' departed from the odious place and people, never to return.

VICTORIA THEATRE, 1841.—At a benefit that I had, the following ladies and gentlemen kindly gave their services:

Mrs. Keeley. Mr. Keeley.

Mrs. Waylett.	Mr. F. Mathews.
„ Stirling.	„ Wrench.
„ Yates.	„ Elton.
„ F. Mathews.	„ James Bennett.
„ Fitzwilliam.	„ Paul Bedford.
Miss Fortescue.	„ Wright.
	„ T. P. Cooke.

NAUTCH DANCERS, ADELPHI.—A troupe of what Yates thought 'Nautch girls' arrived from India in 1836, a veritable bevy of dusky beauties from 'Eastern Ind.' The house over the Theatre in the Strand converted into a bungalow for their arrival. They came—ugly, aged, and awkward! Poor Yates was tricked. Their performances had nothing attractive in them. Music, a reed pipe and tom-tom. They were laughed at publicly, and ridiculed by press and people. Their names were perfectly unpronounceable: fancy this one, 'Sandeinainsmooroo,' abbreviated by our call-

boy into 'Old Sandy-Cat.' Yates lost £800 by this importation, and nearly all our manager's hair was torn off in his daily fits of passion.

CHAPTER XI.

Yates in a Law Court—The Author's adaptation of Dickens's 'Old Curiosity Shop'—A Travelling Booth in distress—Andrew Ducrow—'The Wicked World' at the Haymarket; Letter from Buckstone to the Author—An old 'Super'-master's Stage instructions—Turkey and Truffles—The Author's version of Dickens's 'Martin Chuzzlewit;' Letter from Robert Keeley—Letter from Albert Smith—Macready and the Citizens of Ghent (Philip Van Artevelde)—Real and Artificial Thunder—Jenny Lind and the Manchester Manager—The Duchess of St. Albans (Harriet Mellon) and the Duke—The Author's adaptation of Dickens's 'Christmas Carol'—Characteristic Anecdote of Dickens—Note from Charles Dickens to the Author—Wolverhampton; 'Othello and the Senators'—Sir Francis Chantrey's First Love — Somerset, a dramatic hack-writer—Hull: Pasteboard 'Mazeppa'— Douglas Jerrold's 'Black-Eyed Susan'—Miss Pyne and Harrison at Covent Garden; their failure—Fishing in troubled waters—Punch's Play-House.

YATES IN A LAW COURT (QUEEN'S BENCH).—An action for breach of contract

was brought by Levy, of the Victoria, against Yates, and tried before Lord Denman. Counsel for plaintiff, Sir William Follett; counsel for defendant, Sir Fitzroy Kelly. The cause of action was as follows: Yates had bargained to take his company and Adelphi pieces to the Victoria in the summer. Davidge of the Surrey, alarmed at this arrangement, offered Yates better terms. Unjustly he broke with Levy, under the plea that it would have been illegal to perform pieces licensed by the Lord Chamberlain in an unlicensed theatre. I negotiated the terms, pieces, actors for Yates, reading a list to Hill and Levy, the proprietor and the stage manager. I came to 'Crichton,' then acting with the Eglinton Tournament dresses, at the Adelphi.

'"Crichton," what's that?' asked Levy.

'Admirable Crichton,' was my reply, turning to Hill. (This happened to be

the only piece in which Yates did not find the costumes.)

LEVY: 'Admiral? I see. Hill, he can have the captain's coat I bought last week —gold epaulettes and facings will do for the Admiral.'

At the trial one witness only was examined — myself. Among many cross-questions, Follett asked me the meaning of 'burletta,' wishing to prove Levy could not play musical pieces, so called, without a Lord Chamberlain's license.

'Well, sir, what is it?'

'Of French origin, containing necessary singing and music.'

'Pray, is Mrs. Fitzwilliam an actress, or singer?'

ANSWER: 'Both.'

'Perhaps you can inform us if it is essential that Ophelia should sing in "Hamlet"?'

REPLY: 'Pardon me, Sir William, I

think that Shakespeare settled that question before we were born.'—(*Loud laughter in Court.*)

IRATE COUNSEL: 'Stand down, sir.'

I did, gladly; Sir Fitzroy Kelly remarking to his learned brother, 'The witness, Mr. Stirling, knows more about Shakespeare than we do.'

Levy lost his action.

'OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.'—I adapted this for the Adelphi. QUILP, *Yates;* LITTLE NELL, *Mrs. Kelly.* I received a note from Yates on its success:

'DEAR STIRLING,

'Quilp's up in public estimation; Nell's down—I'll keep her there.

'Yours truly,

'F. YATES.

'E. STIRLING,

'Theatre Royal, Bath.'

A Travelling Booth in Distress.—'Pickup's Grand Temple of the Drama,' Lancashire and Cheshire. Muster Samivel Pickup had laid violent hands on my pieces for many years, defying the Act of Parliament and myself. If a writ went to one town, he moved to another. At last he was caught in Cheshire, betrayed by a discharged actor. Being served with notice of action to some amount, Pickup wrote to me. His letter was as follows —I give it *verbatim et literatim:*

'Doory Lane Play-house London

'Mister Starlin—Sir—

'i am a travellin Thater—only made of canvass, was struck last night in the market place with lightnin—i was blowd down by wind, my roof tore off—my both sides druv in so you see's my hactors is a doing nothing i am a poor man with heap of children, all young-uns my wifes going

into the straw again i opes you'l look hover your sea Kings, son and air lilly dawson this ere time

'Your humble sarvunt

'SAMIVEL PICKUP.

'I'll write when I gets to rochdale fere, good luck to you, give us a leg up.'

I did, remembering the lady in the straw, and his 'heaps of young-uns.

ANDREW DUCROW.—Among a large collection of valuable presents were Byron's pistols; a couple of Florentine casts; boars from the famous Florentine bronze group. Astley's being consumed by fire, Ducrow's dwelling with his collection was entirely destroyed. A friend condoling with him on his loss, Andrew, with a long-drawn sigh—'Shouldn't have cared a straw for all the rest, if I could have saved the blessed pigs.'

THE WICKED WORLD, 1873. — Haymarket. I wrote to Buckstone for a box —with it came this effusion :

'DEAR STIRLING,

'Written downstairs in "Belzebub's" kitchen ; or, if you like it better, upstairs in the "Wicked World." Here's the box in a warm place, near chandelier; sorry I can't give you a better.

'Yours truly,

'J. B. BUCKSTONE,

'Haymarket.

'N.B. Look to my advertisements : the end of "The Wicked World" is soon coming !'

STAGE INSTRUCTION.—An old supermaster at Drury Lane (once a soldier) had an odd way of expressing himself, outmalapropping 'Mrs. Malaprop' in her vernacular. Preparing 'Julius Cæsar' for Brooke,

he gave his supers these directions at a rehearsal :—'Now you first twelve chaps are electors, mind carry them bundles of sticks tied round the choppers *pecumdickerly* over your right shoulders. When you see Mister Davenport (Mark Antony), get into that stone pulpit (Forum)—hollo out "Hear, hear, Mark"' (*pause*)—'never mind his tother name. You're supposed to be *Rumun* roughs, that's the same as our London mob. When he tells you about a corpse laying before you—was killed by daggers stuck into him by his *pals*—I mean friends—you shout out "Siezer, Siezer," and "down with" somebody else in the play. I'll ask who it is, boys.'

TURKEY AND TRUFFLES.—Mitchell, the Court librarian, invited Ebers, the musical bookseller of Bond-street, to dine with him on turkey and truffles, sent by their mutual friend Mdlle. Plessy, from Paris.

Dinner was served, and the turkey seemed excellently cooked, till Mitchell, carving, found the bird stuffed with potatoes instead of Périgord truffles; here was a culinary crisis! The bell was violently rung.

'Send the cook up.'

She came—a rosy native of 'Ould Ireland.'

'What does this mean, Mary?'

'Sure, sir, them's taters.'

'Where are the truffles that came with this turkey, woman?'

'The what, sir?'

'Truffles, idiot!'

'Is that their name? bad luck to the dirty muck, they're in the sink; I took 'em for rotten, and chucked 'em away.'

Mitchell rushed down to the kitchen and recovered his truffles, to be eaten next day with the remains of the turkey hashed.

LYCEUM.—Having proposed a version

(the first) of 'Martin Chuzzlewit' to the Keeleys for their theatre (Lyceum), I received the following letter from Keeley on the subject:

'10, Charlotte-street, Bedford-square,

'DEAR STIRLING,

'Mary [his wife] and I have read carefully Dickens's work; we cannot see our way in a piece from it. But if you like to go on, do [at my own risk, of course]. You have done so much with Dickens's works, try again.

'Yours truly,

'ROBERT KEELEY.'

I went on, luckily for the Keeleys. The piece ran 280 nights, clearing £8000.

CAST.

YOUNG MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, *Mr. F. Vining.*

OLD MARTIN CHIZZLEWIT, *R. Younge.*

PECKSNIFF, *F. Mathews.*
TIGG, *Alfred Wigan.*
JONAS, *Emery.*
TOM PINCH, *Meadows.*
MEGGET, *Turner.*
BAILEY, *Mrs. Keeley.*
MRS. GAMP, *Keeley.*
BETSY PRIG, *Collier.*
MRS. TODGERS, *Mrs. F. Mathews.*
MERCY, *Miss Woolgar.*
CHARITY, *Miss Pincott.*

ALBERT SMITH sent me the following note before the commencement of one of the seasons of his famous Ascent of Mont Blanc, at the Egyptian Hall :

'Percy-street.

'DEAR STIRLING,

'Before I climb up Mont Blanc, for the season, send me a box. I want to see "Punch's" Playhouse. Let me have a

place to stretch my legs in—no rabbit-hutches.

'Yours,

'ALBERT SMITH.'

MACREADY (Siege of Ghent), Princess's. Maddox, lessee.—New play, 'Philip van Artevelde,' exceedingly well mounted; large number of supers, for Flemings; white hoods, French nobles, citizens, etc. The house being badly attended, the first economy resorted to was to cut out half the supers. This was repeated nightly, until the starved men and women of Ghent were reduced to ten. Macready groaned (his accustomed habit when vexed).

'Down to ten, eh? I see famine has done its worst'—groan repeated to Maddox's chuckle.

REAL AND ARTIFICIAL THUNDER.—Boucicault produced a drama at the Princess's (under Kean's management),

'Der Vampyre:' one of the scenes, summit of the Alps by moonlight, a raging storm —thunder and lightning. The Vampyre is supposed to be lying dead on a mountain peak; thunder-claps at given signals herald the return of the monster (Boucicault) to life. A tremendous clap of thunder, startling the audience, and stopping the Vampyre's speech, Boucicault, looking up at the flies:

'Very well, Mr. Davids, you are making more mistakes; that clap of thunder came in the wrong place.'

Davids, bawling to the monster from the flies where he worked his thunder:

'No fault of mine, sir; thunder's real out of doors; perhaps you can stop it there.'

Our Vampyre felt satisfied.

JENNY LIND AND KNOWLES. — The Swedish Nightingale, travelling with

Knowles (Manchester manager) on a concert tour, receiving very high terms, objected to singing occasionally in the mornings, having her evening performances to fulfil. She applied to Knowles on the subject.

'Cannot be helped, my lass; think of the heap of money I pay you. Bills are all out; it *mun* be done' (Lancashire dialect for must). 'My Bank of England notes won't fall into your purse, unless you give me your notes, my lass. It *mun* be done.'

THE DUCHESS OF ST. ALBAN'S (*Mrs. Coutts*) AND THE DUKE.—*She* gained a strawberry coronet by this marriage; *he* £70,000 a year—a pretty good exchange. His Grace was rather weak on one point (acting), in which he cut but an indifferent figure. At every opportunity, when he could do so unknown to the

Duchess, he indulged in Shakespearian recitals. When we were in Cheltenham, the Duke and Duchess were staying at Pittville. In a large private room, with the proprietor (Seymour), his Grace of St. Alban's spouted to his heart's content 'Julius Cæsar,' a favourite study: Brutus St. Alban's; Cassius, Seymour. One unucky day in flounced the Duchess, just at the words 'I'd rather be a dog,' etc. A loud voice was heard, 'I wish you were. Mr. Seymour, I am vexed that you should encourage the Duke to make a fool of himself; he knows no more of acting than a goose! No repetition, I beg! Your Grace, the carriage is at the door'—escorting the poor Duke out entirely chap fallen.

1845.—Engaged to manage the Adelphi for Gladstone. Among the many dramas that I produced and wrote, ranked first

Dickens's 'Christmas Carol,' dramatised by his sanction. Dickens attended several rehearsals, furnishing valuable suggestions. Thinking to make Tiny Tim (a pretty child) more effective, I ordered a set of irons and bandages for his supposed weak leg. When Dickens saw this tried on the child, he took me aside:

'No, Stirling, no; this won't do! remember how painful it would be to many of the audience having crippled children.'

'Gadshill Place,
'Higham by Rochester, Kent.
'Wednesday, Fourteenth November, 1866.

'DEAR SIR,

'I shall be happy to come to "Faust" next Saturday evening. My address in town is (as I dare say you know) 26, Wellington-street.

'Faithfully yours,
'CHARLES DICKENS.

'Edward Stirling, Esquire.'

WOLVERHAMPTON TOWN HALL.—With a good selected company, I ventured to open this amateur theatre. It paid well. Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Buckstone played five nights. Barnet, Suter, Henry Webb, Cowle, Miss K. Howard, etc., etc. My great difficulty was to find subordinates to fill up the scene. Pitmen and colliers refused 'to go 'pon play-house.' 'Othello' without the grave senators would not do. Six young fellows were at last tempted by beer and coin to come: one of them unfortunately met an 'old hand by the theatre.

'Ho'a, wheare best goin', Tom?'

'To play-act the night.'

'What, lad, mak a fule o' thyself! What do they gi' thee for't?'

Reply: 'A bob a night, and beer arterwards.'

Old hand: ''Tain't enof; thee ought to ha' two bob, and beefsteak for supper.

Come yer ways; bring the lads to the Lion, I'll stand a gallon o' yale.'

This proved irresistible. Othello addressed no 'potent, grave, and reverend senators' that night.

Sir Francis Chantrey's First Love. —During my stay in Sheffield, I was introduced to a lady—Byng the singer's mother. She related her course of true-love, that unluckily for her did not run smooth. Frank Chantrey, son of a small dairy-farmer, living at a village near Sheffield (Norton), carried milk every morning to supply his customers in the town, among them, Byng's father, a well-to-do pawnbroker. His daughter, pretty Jane, never missed taking in the milk; and a pleasant chat, sundry squeezes of the hand, perchance a kiss, attended the morning milk. If by chance Frank had to wait, he amused himself by scratching

faces and figures on the doorposts with his knife (was not this an indication of his future ?). Some prying neighbour watched pretty Jane and Frank's tender meetings, and told her father of their goings-on. Our wealthy pawnbroker sternly forbade their meeting—changed his milk-man—forbade his daughter ever to think of a poor milk-boy. Better if she had. Lady Chantrey would have suited pretty Jane; and a gifted husband instead of her equal, according to pawnbroker Byng's ideas of propriety!

SOMERSET, 1835, dramatic author, clever and well-educated, translator of a series of German operas for Elliston's Juvenile Operatic Company at the Surrey, and author of a piece that ran for some weeks at Covent Garden, entitled 'The Early Days of Shakespeare.' Charles Kemble played Shakespeare; Ellen Tree,

Anne Hathaway. Somerset supplied the Surrey, Cobourg, Sadler's Wells, etc., with 'The Sea,' 'Mistletoe Bough,' and a series of effective dramas—on terms that would startle dramatic authors nowadays. Five pounds to poor Somerset was a windfall.* Twenty-five shillings in his later days for a two-act piece, he gladly received, Reduced to the last extremity, I saw him standing before the Mansion House, with a printed label hung round his neck, inscribed thus: 'Ladies and Gentlemen, I am starving!' Think of this, followers of the gentle craft! you that receive thousands for productions in numerous instances not superior to those of unfortunate Somerset.

HULL. PASTEBOARD 'MAZEPPA.'—Yates and his company. Downe's actors at

* Benjamin Webster, who wrote cleverly, was once content to dramatise 'Paul Clifford' for Davidge for a remuneration of five pounds.

Hull. The venture proved a decided failure. Driven to his wit's end, he sent for me to come from London to give him a helping hand in his trouble. My first idea was to hit upon a piece that had been popular in the town. All spoke of 'Mazeppa.' They, the townsfolk, had seen it produced by Ducrow with great splendour and real horses. 'You shall see it without,' said I. A wild horse of the Ukraine, made of pasteboard to gallop over rocks, deep ravines, and roaring torrents, with poor Creswick (Mazeppa in effigy, pasteboard again). A cab horse—hired nightly—dashed on the stage from the wings, with the real Creswick tied to him. This cunning device completely bewildered crowded audiences. They came in shoals, neglecting really good acting and legitimate plays for pasteboard!

'BLACK-EYED SUSAN,' the best nautical

drama ever written, produced to Douglas Jerrold, the author, £50, from Elliston, at the Surrey. No Dramatic Authors' Bill to protect his rights in country or town. T. P. Cooke made £10,000 by 'Black-Eyed Susan,' playing it all through Great Britain for years. Elliston cleared a large sum by it. *Original Cast:* Dograss, Dibdin Pitt; Captain Crosstree, Forrester; Twig, Rogers; Admiral, Gough; Gnatbrain, Buckstone; Ploughshare, Webb; Lieutenant, C. Hill; William, T. P. Cooke; Black-Eyed Susan, Miss Scott; Dolly Mayflower, Mrs. Vale.

For SEVEN SEASONS I was at Covent Garden Theatre, managing for Louisa Pyne and William Harrison (vocalists). These clever artists endeavoured, not wisely, to establish English Opera permanently in London, engaging the best singers and English-Irish composers—

Balfe, Vincent Wallace, Mellon, etc.; a magnificent stage, scenery, appointments and costumes perfect. Balfe gave two new works, 'The Bravo' and 'Satanella;' Wallace two, 'Lurline' and 'Forest Flower;' Mellon, 'Victorine;' pantomimes at Christmas, with the Payne family, Boleno Flexmore; Grieves and Danson to paint: all to one end—failure. At her Majesty's Theatre, I had the painful duty to tell the assembled company that the treasury had stopped with a loss of £20,000 from Harrison, and £12,000 from Miss Pyne, the earnings of their lives. Sims Reeves, Santley, Mazzoni, Madame Kenneth, acted and sang in 'Faust,' to a house of £81. This was not encouraging or profitable to a laudable enterprise, undertaken to supply the public with native talent at moderate prices.

BALFE FISHING IN TROUBLED WATERS.

—The treasury at Drury Lane occasionally was unable to meet the salaries. Dunn, the treasurer, invariably disappeared when the cash ran short, leaving a subordinate to meet the irate company, instructing the sub-treasurer to tell them that he had gone on a fishing excursion. This fishing annoyed Balfe greatly. When he engaged at the Lyceum to produce a new opera, one of the conditions was, that the treasurer should not be allowed to fish on a Saturday, until after treasury hours.

PUNCH'S PLAY HOUSE, STRAND.—Rechristened 'Punch' by Copeland, the Liverpool manager, in 1851 (year of the Great Exhibition). This change of name, intended as a compliment to Douglas Jerrold, Mrs. Copeland's brother, proved a failure. The pit ascending to the gallery, gallery descending to the pit, thus reversing their positions, displeased the public and emptied

Copeland's treasury. It was my task to conduct the establishment for the year. Charles Reade wrote several pieces for 'Punch,' adapted from French sources,—a 'Village Tale,' one of the best, done into English from 'Claude the Reaper.' I played 'Patrick, an old soldier,' the Claude of the French version. Luckily our season paid at the close, from the number of provincial visitors, who flocked to London to see the world's fair in Hyde Park.

CHAPTER XII.

Ellen Tree (Mrs. Charles Kean) and the Man-monkey (Monsieur Gouffé)—Elliston and Archer—Prince and Player—Mrs. Penson and the Duke of Clarence—Tyrone Power—Letter from him to the Author—His sad fate—The French Horn and 'Willy Shakespeare'—Curious Mistake of a Methodist.

ELLEN TREE AND A MAN-MONKEY (Monsieur Gouffé).—Miss Tree played with us six nights in her leading characters. She was always a favourite in Birmingham, and she drew good houses. Gouffé, a clever imitator of the monkey tribe, acted in the after-piece, 'Jack Robinson and his Monkey.' Gouffé's career was short, but curious. Originally a pot-boy, he amused the customers of the house by climbing and running round ceilings, shelves, and

every available place in tap-rooms, and imitating in a most natural manner monkey tricks, utterances, and habits. Davidge heard of him, and engaged him for the Surrey. Sam Todd, transformed into Monsieur Gouffé, just arrived from South America, appeared in a new monkey piece at the Surrey, and made a real hit, for months drawing large sums to Manager Davidge's treasury. Provincial managers bid highly for the new monkey, I among the rest for Birmingham. Gouffé, a coarse, uneducated fellow, fell deeply in love with Miss Tree. Sedulously he watched her nightly performances. At the wing, on one occasion, he declared his passion after the performance of 'The Wife,' Miss Tree sitting alone in the green-room. Down our monkey (dressed to go on) threw himself at her feet.

'I likes you, miss—yes, I does—better than nothing else in the vorld.. I'll marry

ye, if ye likes. Mind, I ain't always a monkey; earns lots o' money—fifty and sixty puns a week: you shall have it all—*goold* real earrings, *saton gownds*, an a one *oss shay* to ride up and down in.'

Miss Tree, perfectly astounded at this odd declaration, laughingly declined Monsieur's liberal offer, preferring Charles Kean to a man-monkey. Gouffé unfortunately found a lady who did listen to his '*goold*' and '*satons*,' and that to his cost. She spent his money, and when the poor monkey's attraction ceased, eloped, and left him to die in a workhouse.

Cock of the Walk.—Elliston, starring at Birmingham (Bunn, manager), played his famous character of Rover in 'Wild Oats.' Harry Thunder, the second part in the comedy, was allotted to Archer, then leading man, who accepted Thunder with a very bad grace. At rehearsals he persisted in keeping up the stage behind

Elliston, who remonstrated with him for this, telling Bunn to order Archer down the stage. Not an inch, however, would the first tragedian budge. Elliston, exceedingly vexed, said :

'Sir, do you know who and what I am ? —Robert William Elliston, sir, and lessee of Drury Lane.'

Reply : 'Oh yes, I know all about it : every cock can crow on his own dunghill ; this stage is mine, and here I can crow as loud as you.'

Strange to state, Elliston engaged him for Drury Lane, so amused was he by the actor's impudence.

PRINCE AND PLAYER.—When the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland lived at Kew, they were frequent visitors to the Richmond Theatre, managed by Klanert. On one occasion they commanded Poole's 'Paul Pry,' then extremely popular, through

Liston's wonderful acting. Of course our manager played 'Pry.' Prince George of Cumberland (afterwards King of Hanover) was then a handsome boy of ten. The play over, our company, headed by 'Paul Pry,' waited on the stage to make our bow to their Royal Highnesses at their depar ture. Prince George ran up to Klanert, seized his hand, laughing:

'Oh, I did like you so! you are the ugliest man that I ever saw.'

DUCHESS: 'George, hush! thank Mr. Klanert and the ladies and gentlemen for the amusement they afforded us, sir.'

PRINCE: 'I do; but, ma, he is ugly, say what you will.'

His royal papa led the boy away, laugh ing, to our delight, and to Paul Pry's no small discomfort.

LYMINGTON.—Shalders and Penson, or more correctly Mrs. Penson, managed

our little circuit—Portsmouth, Southampton, etc. The old lady, rather illiterate and very eccentric, attended rehearsals, made out the bills, paid our salaries, and took money at the one door for boxes, pit, and gallery! Naval officers frequently came from Portsmouth during our stay, principally to have a bit of fun with the old lady; among the 'middies,' Prince William Henry (afterwards William IV.). Mrs. Penson being near-sighted had been tricked with bad money: the Prince tried the experiment with her; throwing down a crown-piece, he quickly passed on.

'Stop, stop, your Royal Highness! I must put my spectacles on to see if your crown's a good one. I know your royal father—Heaven bless him!—wears one' (*turning over coin*). 'This won't do—none of your sailor's tricks for Sally Penson. If you try this fun again, I'll write to your father.'

Boys frequently came to her during the evening: 'Please, Mrs. Penson, mother's sent you some cabbages; may I go in?'

'Eh! what? let's look at 'em; how much money have you brought?'

Reply: 'Tup-pence.'

'Oh, very well; give it to me and the cabbages. Go up, and mind and behave yourself.'

New-laid eggs, pears, and other fruit, all came as grist to Sally's mill. In the most affecting scenes of a tragedy, if she heard a noise in the gallery, she rushed into the pit to scold: 'Now, you boys, keep your ugly mouths shut' (*selecting one*). 'Master Billy, your father shall hear of this to-morrow. No more play-acting for you, my lad.' Tyrone Power, one of our company, was very shy and bashful—not a common failing with Irishmen by any means. Power invariably turned his face from the audience. This annoyed Mrs. P. Repeatedly she told him of it, to little pur-

pose. She hit upon another method ; one night she called out to him before everyone : 'Power, you shamefaced lout, turn your face to the people that pay to see it! It's ugly enough—they won't want to see it twice, I swear!'

TYRONE POWER.—When the St. James's Theatre, under Braham's management, failed in 1839, Mrs. Braham consulted me relative to her proceedings under such trying circumstances. I suggested Power's engagement, with Lover's new Irish piece, 'Rory O'More.' At the lady's request I saw Power on the subject. He asked for some days to consider, having previously received an offer for the Adelphi. A brief letter explained his refusal :

'20, Albion-street, Hyde-park,
'13th inst.

'DEAR SIR,

'I must decline your proposition ; in truth, I would rather "whistle" "Rory

O'More" at the Adelphi than play it at the St. James's.

'Yours obediently,

'TYRONE POWER.

'E. Stirling, Esq.

'John-street, Adelphi.'

Poor Power was drowned in the *President*, on his homeward voyage from America, in the prime of life and plenitude of fame.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON, SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCHYARD.—Watching a sexton, removing an old gravestone bearing the date 1661, my abstraction was disturbed by a hand on my shoulder.

'Excuse me, sir, I see by your face you like my fellow-townsman, Shakespeare. I'll show you a relic of him.' Here was a real surprise. 'Walk with me.'

I did, to his lodgings. Carefully wrapped up, he brought forth—what?—a rusty old weather-cock, inscribed '1573.'

'This vane,' said he, 'blew down last year. I luckily picked it up. If it could speak, wouldn't it tell us how often and often sweet Willy looked up at it to see which way the wind blew!' (a very natural deduction). 'I dare say you wonder who I am?' (*bowing*).

I did.

'A French horn.'

'What?'

'Yes, I travel with a menagerie up and down the country, blowing my inside out for twenty-two shillings a week. I'll turn it up, and go on the stage. Shakespeare did, and he went to the same school that I did.'

After so much confidence on the part of my new acquaintance, I ventured to state that I was connected with Drury Lane, and thanking him for his interesting communications, bade him good-day. To my no small astonishment, a few weeks after

came this proposal from the 'French horn:'

'Stratford on Avon

'DEAR SIR

'According to promise i rite and if you can do anything for me i am not afraid but what i can give you satisfaction. i can imitate the Cornet Saxhorn Clarinet Harp Violoncello &c. can sound four octaves sing old Jowler with imitations of the huntsmans horn hounds in full cry death sound at the distance i was with Offemans in the name of Herr Herlong two months left not likeing the party i took the lead in the first March song bass in the glees played second in the rest of the tunes i was born in the same street as the immortall Bard had hold of a deer in the same park that he stolen is from the day after last Christmas have never been in London yet but thought i should have

liked to have come with the deer if you can do anything for me you will oblige your humble servant

'JOHN KEMP
No. 15 Scholars Lane
Stratford on Avon.

'Sing Comic or sentimental'

I immediately replied to 'Herr Herlong,' advising him to replace the deer in Lucy's park, forget 'Will,' and stick to the French horn and Old Jowler.

MISS HERON, the eminent American actress, gave a musical entertainment from Longfellow's 'Hiawatha.' At her first recital at Covent Garden Theatre, I had the stage enclosed, and all the lights extinguished behind the scenes, except the float. Our chorus, in evening garb (traditional faded black), assisted Miss Heron by singing melancholy choruses at certain parts of her recital, to an organ accompani-

ment. At her first representation, everything was noiseless—not a soul to be seen. The hall-keeper was away, and Miss Heron, in deep black velvet, stood or sat at a desk before the chorus, reciting in measured tones much about the 'West Wind,' to very few hearers. Solemn peals of the organ succeeded. Standing at the wing, I became aware of a stranger, who touched my shoulder, politely asking if 'the service had begun.' This rather astonished me at first—not upon reflection.

'What do you take this place for, pray?'

TIMID LITTLE MAN: 'A "chapel," sir' (he had entered by the stage-door, always gloomy).

Struck by this odd mistake, I carried the joke out.

'Yes,' I said, 'it is; and there's the preacher' *(pointing to Miss Heron)*.

In the light he recognised a theatre, and rushed out, exclaiming :

'A House of Satan! You'll all be d——d! Avaunt! avaunt!'

BOOK II.

RECORDS OF DRURY LANE AND ITS LESSEES AND MANAGERS, WITH A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF HER MAJESTY'S OPERA.

CHAPTER I.

THE theatres soon after the Restoration, revived. Two patents were granted by Charles II., one to form a company to be called the King's; the other, the Duke's. They were severally granted to Sir William Davenant and to Mr. Killigrew. But both these patentees found it prudent to take some of the principal actors into shares with them; accordingly, Mohun, Hart, Kynaston, and other actors, became partners with Killigrew. Thomas Killigrew, the first patentee of Drury Lane, appeared at Whitehall, dressed as a pilgrim, before Charles II., at one of the merry monarch's revels. The king, surprised, asked him whither he was going?

'To h——l,' bluntly replied the wag.

'What can your errand be to that place, Killigrew?'

'To fetch back "Old Noll," that he may take some care of the affairs of England; for his successor takes none at all!'

Charles made him ambassador to Venice. Sir John Denham thus humorously draws our lessee's character in verse:

'Our resident Tom
From Venice is come,
And has left the statesman behind him;
Talks at the same pitch,
Is as wise, is as rich,
And just where you left him, you find him
For who says he's not
A man of some plot,
May repent this false accusation;
Having plotted and plann'd
Six plays to attend
The farce of his negotiation.'

Drury Lane was destroyed by fire in 1671, and was re-built by Sir Christopher Wren.

ORIGINAL PLAY BILL.

8th April, 1668.—The king's servants commenced their performances with Beaumont and Fletcher's

'HUMOROUS LIEUTENANT.'

THE KING, *Mr. Winterset,*
DEMETRIUS, *Mr. Hart.*
SILVEYS, *Mr. But.*
LIEUTENANT, *Mr. Clon.*
CELIA, *Mrs. Marshall* [the first female actress].

The play will begin at 3 o'clock, exactly. Boxes, 4*s.*; pit, 2*s.* 6*d.*; middle gallery, 1*s.* 6*d.*; upper gallery, 1*s.*

THE KING'S AND DUKE'S Companies united and played in Drury Lane;—Killigrew, Hart, Mohun, Dryden, and Wilks, the great comedian. His nose (a very large one) seen at the wing, was sufficient to set the house in a roar. His drollery and genuine humour were unrivalled.

1690.—Sir William Davenant sold his patent to Rich and Langley, lessees. Sir Thomas Skipwith afterwards became a partner.

1703 and 1709.—Wilks, Cibber, and Estcourt, lessees.

1709.—Doggett (of coat and badge memory), Cibber, Wilks, joint lessees. The theatre revived, and the actors began to know the sweets of being honestly and regularly paid.

1710.—Rich and Cibber. Cibber turned Rich out, and became sole lessee.

1713.—Booth, Cibber, and Doggett were managers; Fleetwood and Rich succeeded them.

1714.—George I. granted Sir Richard Steele a patent, as Governor of his Majesty's Company of Comedians; and Messrs. Wilks, Cibber, and Booth were made joint directors with him. Steele died in 1729.

1732.—A new patent was granted to Cibber, Wilks, and Booth.

1744.—Green and Archer purchased the patent of Fleetwood for £3,200, and sold a third to John Lacy upon his undertaking to manage the theatre. The purchasers (bankers) failed; Lacy purchased their shares, and obtained a new patent.

1745.—Lacy sole lessee.

1748.—Garrick and Lacy were the rulers of his Majesty's servants. On the abilities of Garrick, both as an actor and as a manager, it would be superfluous to dwell here.

1749.—Garrick sole lessee and manager; and well he catered for the public, so subordinate to the power of fashion, that every whim, every word, every vice, every virtue in its turn became the rage, and was followed for a time.

1776.—Richard Sheridan, Ford and Thomas Linley (Sheridan's brother-in-law) were partners in old Drury's fortunes.

JOHN KEMBLE ruled for a few months, with indifferent success.

1788.—Sheridan sole lessee. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, orator, wit, and dramatist, was born at Dublin in 1751, and educated at Harrow. He became a student of the Middle Temple, but was never called to the bar. In 1775 he brought out the 'Duenna,' and the 'School for Scandal' in 1777. He entered the House of Commons for Stafford in 1780, and rapidly became distinguished in debate. His speech at the trial of Warren Hastings was considered a masterpiece of eloquence.

A new theatre was built by Holland. The old one closed in 1791. It was re-opened in 1793, with John Kemble as Macbeth and as stage manager.

Sheridan was a rare boon companion, with his unflagging spirits, wit, and hilarity. The Prince Regent sought his society: at the

orgies held at Carlton House, Sheridan reigned supreme—his life a perpetual round of pleasure and indulgence. Married to an exemplary lady, Miss Linley, he speedily spent her fortune, and began to subsist chiefly on credit. His supreme indifference for creditors, his prolific promises (made only to be broken) became notorious: marvellously persuasive, the most turbulent tradesfolk had little chance with 'Sherry.'

A bill standing for years with one Jones, a fashionable boot-maker, provoked the incensed and irate creditor to call on Sheridan personally, determined to have his money. One morning a loud knock at Sherry's door was speedily answered by a demure-looking footman, inquiring his business.

'Your master: I must see him.'

Mild rejoinder: 'Sorry to say he is out, sir.'

'Won't do for me!'

A push, and Jones was in the hall.

'Here I sit until he comes home.'

JAMES: 'You can't stay here.'

'Can't I? you'll see. I'll sleep here; I'm a fixture.'

Sheridan meantime was chuckling over this episode in the breakfast-parlour; loud words passed and repassed, interrupted by Sheridan's bell, and his voice, inquiring, 'What is all that uproar about, James?'

JONES (*loud*): 'Boots, sir—Jones of Bond-street.'

Sheridan rushed out, seized both his hands.

'My dear Jones, how are you? delighted to see you!'

'Fellow (*to demure James*), how dared you detain my friend Jones in the hall? Walk in, pray.'

Arm in arm, Spider and Fly enter the parlour together.

'Chair, Jones.'

They sit.

'Breakfasted? Of course you have. Twelve o'clock (*sighs*): Ah, my dear sr, legislating is no joke; late hours, wear and tear. By-the-bye, how is dear Mrs. Jones? any increase of the family? When I last called, one of your olive branches had—had, dear me——'

JONES: 'Measles, sir.'

'That's it. And pray, why am I honoured by this call so early?'

Reply: 'Three years' boots and shoes, sir.'

SHERRY: 'Three years! How time flies! Our brief hours soon slip away, Jones.'

'Yes, sir, but credit don't.'

SHERIDAN: 'No, certainly; I'll write you a cheque.'

'Thank you, sir.'

'Glass of wine?' (*pours one out*).

Then a chat, embracing every conceiv-

able subject, concluding with 'Sherry's' last play 'Pizarro' (*writing a box order*):

'Bring your wife and children. Kemble, Siddons, Jordan, all in it. (*Rings bell.*) James, carriage—due at the House. Good-bye, Jones; regards to Mrs. J. Stop, now you are here, measure me for half-a-dozen pairs of top-boots. (*Jones did.*) Thank ye. Always delighted to see you,—mind that, James.' Door closes upon mystified Jones: he had two orders, one for boots, the other for the play.

Immense success attended the production of 'Pizarro.' With Sheridan's usual negligence, the play was not all written at the first representation. The fifth act was sent down to the actors from his room bit by bit. ROLLO, *John Kemble;* ALONZO, *Charles Kemble;* ELVIRA, *Mrs. Siddons;* CORA, *Mrs. Jordan.*

Sherry being asked to give a guinea towards the funeral of a worthy but poor solicitor:

'Certainly,' said the wit, 'I'd willingly give twenty to bury twenty lawyers at any time.'

DRURY LANE BURNT TO THE GROUND, February 24th, 1809. When the fire broke out, Sheridan was in the House of Commons. Sympathy for him induced the members to move an adjournment; this Sheridan respectfully declined. He hastened to the fire, tried to force his way through the crowd, pushed back by soldiers (called out to keep order):

'Stand back, sir.'

'My friend,' said the wit, 'surely a man may warm himself by his own fire.'

SHERIDAN AND HIS ARCHITECT.—Holland and Wyatt, architects to the new Theatre Royal, Drury-lane (the present one),* could never get Sheridan to pay, but

* Opened on the 10th of October, 1812. Mr. Whitbread and a committee built the theatre at a cost of £200,000.

were met with constant excuses. Holland resolved to call at a rehearsal on the stage. Before he could utter a word, Sherry rushed to him, taking his hand: 'Dear Holland, the very man I wished to see. You want a cheque, of course? Beautiful building! everything one could desire, save a trifle, but important to me. My shilling gallery customers can't hear a word on the stage.'

'Impossible!' exclaimed Holland.

'Is it? You shall judge—remain at the footlights.'

Scampering upstairs to the gallery, he began to gesticulate, widely extending his mouth (but not uttering a word) to the great confusion of the poor architect. Descending to the stage, he inquired:

'Well, my boy, did you hear me?'

'Not a word!'

'Are you convinced? No? Well, then, go up yourself—speak, and I'll listen.'

Holland climbed to the upper gallery; while Sheridan rushed out at the stage-door, leaving his dupe to talk to himself.

Fortune withdrew her smiles from Sheridan, leaving him with broken health and steeped in poverty. Cold neglect followed this sad change; those whom he had so much delighted by the brilliancy of his wit, deserted him in the hour of misfortune. The Prince Regent gave neither sympathy nor money—such is the fickleness of royal favour. Sheridan died July, 1816.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRESENT DRURY LANE THEATRE was opened in 1812, under the management of Arnold, by a committee of noblemen and gentlemen: the Earl of Essex, the Earl of Derby, Lord Byron, Samuel Whitbread, M.P., Douglas Kinnaird, and others. Very indifferent success attended the efforts of the Honourable Board, verifying the old adage, 'Too many cooks spoil the broth.' An empty treasury, deserted benches, rebellious actors, brought New Drury Lane into difficulties. What was to be done? Chance did what managerial judgment had so signally failed to do. Dr. Arnold, travelling to Exeter,

strolled into the theatre, and saw Edmund Kean. Struck with his wonderful power and originality, he forthwith engaged him to appear at Drury Lane at a salary of £8 per week. Even this modest sum was accorded with great displeasure by the reigning magnates. Kean's personal appearance did not add to their satisfaction; and most of them considered that Arnold had fooled away the money. Kean, meanly clothed, short in stature, peculiar in manners, compared disadvantageously with the actors employed at Drury Lane. With great difficulty did Dr. Arnold obtain the appointment of a night for Kean's appearance. At length it came, yielded unwillingly. The rehearsals were conducted by Rae, the stage-manager, in a very slovenly manner: performers absent, notably Mrs. W. West. Kean's *début* was fixed for Friday, 26th January, 1814. The poor itinerant strolling player found

himself on the boards of Old Drury. Announcement: 'Merchant of Venice.' SHYLOCK, *Mr. Kean* (from the Theatre Royal, Exeter, his first appearance); PORTIA, *Mrs. W. West.*

This lady looked down upon the little man in the capes (a nickname bestowed upon Kean, on account of his wearing a coat with many capes—the existing fashion—a second-hand purchase to conceal his shabby clothes). His startling innovations upon the ruling Kemble school of pompous delivery were received with suppressed sneers. Raymond, the acting manager, spoke very strongly on this new style, wishing Kean to alter it.

'Never,' said the tragedian, 'never! The public will soon let me know if they think it wrong.'

Coldly received at first by a poor house, the 'Jew' gradually won his victory: first inattention, followed by intense silence; then

absorbed attention, worked up into absolute rapture with the progress of the play. Drury's walls rang again and again with hearty cheers. The Trial Scene brought the applause to a culminating point; the play was stopped; Kean called and recalled. Since Garrick's days such a hit had never been made without the aid of puffing or of friends. Edmund Kean stood alone, master of the scene, a recognised genius. Dr. Arnold's bad bargain filled the exhausted treasury, in one season £25,000. Kean's salary was at once raised to £20 per week. He never forgave the unfeeling treatment that he had received from the company in his days of adversity.

STEPHEN KEMBLE, one year manager of Drury Lane Theatre, was totally eclipsed by the transcendent talents of his sister, Mrs. Siddons. Stephen merely took a

second-rate position as an actor, though well educated, as all Roger Kemble's children were. Falstaff was played by Stephen without stuffing or padding. Henry Kemble, Stephen's son, made his appearance at Drury Lane during his father's reign. Romeo was his opening character. Endowed with a fine figure and powerful voice, he made himself well heard in the galleries, thereby much pleasing its occupants. A friendly critic, a dustman, was heard to say to his wife, on their leaving the theatre :

'My eyes, Sal, there's a *woice*. I could *'ave 'eard* him on the barges, *t'other* side o' the water. That's what I calls real *hacting*, old gal, any how, eh ?'

Robert William Elliston, a scholar of Paul's School, accomplished and well-connected, encouraged by his managerial success in the provinces and at the Olympic

Theatre, cast his fortunes into the whirlpool of Drury, which he conducted with extreme liberality and excellent taste, engaging the best of actors and actresses, and scenic artists of the highest rank—David Roberts, Clarkson Stanfield, etc. Standing alone in comedy of the higher class, Elliston continued to spend his own and his wife's fortune, quitting the theatre a bankrupt. One of poor Elliston's weaknesses was a consuming and inappeasable vanity; he could digest any amount of adulation, and a host of parasites unluckily surrounded him, ever ready to flatter. A piece of Planché's 'The Coronation,' introduced Elliston as George IV. in the Coronation scene, at Westminster Hall. Elliston, having dined out, gave the admiring public a taste of his inordinate self-importance. Leaving his throne, King Robert William advanced to the foot-lights, extending his royal arms towards the pit, and in the ful-

ness of his heart graciously exclaimed: 'God bless you, my people!' The real king could do no more (query as much?). Elliston pleased his people—George IV. disgusted his. A mounted champion, armed to the teeth, galloped over a platform, crossing the pit and orchestra, and threw down his gauntlet on the stage, proclaiming his mock sovereign's right, challenging any that dared dispute it. Here was sensation!

Careless habits crept into his management, fostered by intemperance. This sad failing hastened the fall of a capital actor and polished gentleman. His last performance at Drury Lane was in 'Henry the Fourth,' Part the First.

CAST.

KING HENRY, *Mr. Barry* (his first appearance).

PRINCE OF WALES, *James Wallack.*

HOTSPUR, *Macready.*
POINS, *Browne.*
BARDOLPH, *G. Smith.*
NORTHUMBERLAND, *Archer.*
WORCESTER, *Bennett.*
PISTOL, *Harley.*
FALSTAFF, *Elliston* (first time).
LADY PERCY, *Mrs. W. West.*
DAME QUICKLY, *Mrs. Harlowe.*
&c., &c.

This cast, backed by new scenery, costumes, etc., could not fail to prove attractive. Elliston played the roguish old knight inimitably in the first two acts. In the third it became evident that Jack Falstaff had swallowed too much sack. His words were uttered incoherently, and he walked with unsteady gait. The audience began to be provoked. In the fourth act matters became worse. Falstaff rolled to and fro like a ship at sea : hisses and cries

of 'shame!' were audible. In the scene with dead Percy's body, which he ought to have dragged off the stage, 'fat Jack' fell over it, not to rise again. The audience were now furious. Wallack vainly tried to speak :

'Sudden indisposition,' etc.

'No, no, Wallack ; he is drunk!'

The curtain fell amidst a storm of hisses and groans. Elliston never trod the boards of Old Drury again. He quitted its portals a ruined and disgraced man.

ELLISTON, HIS SECRETARY, AND A YOUNG AUTHOR.—A young gentleman who had written a play in five acts, wished to read it to Elliston, and, having some interest to back his request, the great man consented to see him. The author with his MS. timidly enters the theatrical potentate's study, where Elliston and his secretary are seated at a table. A gentle knock is heard outside the door.

LOUD VOICE (*inside*): 'Come in.'

Author, trembling, enters; presents his card.

'Oh yes, I see; be seated, sir. Excuse me a few moments.—Now, Benjamin' (*to secretary*), 'proceed with the potatoes; we left off at "Yorkshire reds," when Mr. —— came in. "Kidneys"' (*reading a paper*) '"are dear, very; Suffolks, easy; but then the flavour—no, no, we'll leave Suffolks out; kidneys, ah!' (*smacking his lips*) 'I love a Regent: two sacks of Regents, Benjamin; picked, mind, picked and floury.—Now, sir, we'll proceed to your tragedy, if you please;'—and Raleigh's healthy esculent gives place to the tragic muse. 'Proceed, sir.'

'Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal
Transport my liege beyond the bounds of reason.'

'Your title, sir?'

'A Tyrant's Curse!'

'Go on.'

'Alvaidez, the tyrant, discovered on the sea-shore; a violent tempest raging, thunder, lightning, etc.; the tyrant, pacing the shore, violently agitated:

'"'Tis well, my soul perceives returning greatness,
As Nature feels the spring! Lightly she bounds,
And shakes dishonour, like a burden, from her,
Once more imperial, awful, and herself.
So when of old, Jove from the Titans fled,
Treason's rude front his radiate face belied,
And all the majesty of Heaven lay hid.
At length by fate to power again restored,
His thunder taught the world to know its lord:
The god grew terrible, as I do now,
And was again adored.'
(*Loud thunder; waves rise, approaching shore.*)

'Stop, sir, stop!' exclaimed Elliston; 'if the waves drown your tyrant before the play begins, where are you then? Take him inland, sir. Good-day.—Ben, show the gentleman out; and don't neglect the "Regents."'

ELLISTON AND THE COUNT.—The Count (a foreigner) incessantly haunted Drury

Lane, with his MS. plays. Elliston, greatly annoyed, answered his importunity on one occasion :

'Sir, I have not time to peruse them ; good-day.'

'Stop, sa, do you know that I am a count ?'

'Possibly, sir, but you are no *account* here.'

CHAPTER III.

STEPHEN PRICE, an American, who succeeded Elliston as lessee of Drury Lane, conducted the theatre with judgment and liberal expenditure. Edwin Forrest, the foremost actor in the United States, made his bow here to playgoers in the old country. Forrest possessed a fine figure and powerful voice. He played Macbeth, Richard, Othello, etc., very well, but his best personation was 'Spartacus':— a play of that name had been written for him in America. In his will he bequeathed his well-earned fortune to establish a home for aged actors and actresses, attached to a college for poor children of players, sup-

porting and educating them. All honour to his name for this good deed! Price introduced Charles Kean to the boards of Old Drury during his management; tempting him with an offer of £12 per week; his first appearance as Young Norval, in the play of 'Douglas.' It is with regret that I am compelled to add that Price quitted Drury Lane a considerable loser.

BROTHERLY LOVE.—When Price governed Drury Lane he invariably treated Dowton with great kindness. This mightily pleased the comedian; who was always declaring to his fellow-actors that Price behaved like a brother to him. When Price returned to America, he persuaded Dowton to engage with him for the Park Theatre, New York, to play a series of his best characters. The actor appeared, failed, and returned to Drury Lane, complaining bitterly of the unkind treatment

that he had received from Manager Price. The others laughed, and Harley reminded Dowton of his former praise of his 'more than brother.'

IRATE ACTOR: 'Brother, sir, brother be d——d! what's that? Abel had a brother, sir!'

ALFRED BUNN succeeded Price, holding the reins for many years, a man of talent and theatrical experience. Balfe was largely patronised by Bunn; many of the clever composer's best works were presented to public notice by him—'Bohemian Girl,' 'Siege of Rochelle,' 'Bride of Venice,' &c.—with scenic displays by the best masters, David Roberts and Clarkson Stanfield. Wallace produced his 'Maritani' under Bunn's rule. John Barnett's 'Mountain Sylph' was imported from the English Opera House (Lyceum).

Grand ballets produced on a large scale,

introducing the most famous dancers in Europe. Taglioni, Duvernay, Cerito, Fanny Elsler, Monsieur Leon, etc., delighted the town by their graceful talents. His operatic corps boasted names of the highest note—Braham, first of English tenors; Sinclair, Horn, Pearman, T. Cooke, Templeton; the renowned vocalist, Madame Malibran; Miss Stephens, Miss Cawse. Sheridan Knowles, Maturin, Poole, were among the authors who wrote for him. His list of actors included Macready, Wallack, Bennett, Cooper, Dowton, Knight, Jones, Keeley, Harley, Sherwin, Liston, Mathews, etc.; Mrs. Bunn, Mrs. W. West, Miss Phillips, Waylett, Miss Smithson, Miss Kelly, Miss Ellen Tree, Mrs. Stirling, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Davenport, Mrs. Harlow, etc. Bunn entered into partnership with Captain Polhill, M.P. for Bedford; leasing Covent Garden Theatre. One would have been enough. As matters

turned out, the Captain retired in three years, minus £100,000, paying heavily for his folly. Bunn went cheerily on, well kept up by Balfe's operas, and his pretty *corps-de-ballet.* A cloud came over the great Alfred's sunny rule; Macready, deeming himself insulted, came to blows with him. This carried manager and tragedian into a law court. Macready had to pay £200 damages for assaulting his employer. Mac crossed over to Covent Garden with a new play of Bulwer's—the 'Lady of Lyons.' This introduced that charming actress, Miss Helen Faucit, to the public stage, an ornament on and off the boards. William Harrison made his mark as a tenor singer in Balfe's 'Bohemian Girl,' and Miss Romer's 'Arline' will be remembered.

Halévy's opera, 'La Juive,' furnished Bunn with a good spectacle, real armour, boiling cauldron; Vandenhoff, Cooper,

Ellen Tree, etc., to support the principal characters. Pantomimes increased in importance; during Bunn's rule a host of pantomimists appeared, including Payne, Mathews, and Wieland. At last—a *last* must come in all things—Bunn's wits and exchequer failed, and the doors of Drury were closed upon him, to be re-opened by ALEXANDER LEE, composer and musician. Some of the most popular ballads of that day were Lee's. But everything he ventured on failed, not in effect, but as regards the filling of the treasury. He got together an excellent company for English opera, tragedy, and comedy, all to no purpose. He quitted the theatre with a net loss of £10,000. Not very encouraging for the man that followed, to guide the helm of the good ship 'Drury' into a safe port.

WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY took up this hazardous venture, nothing afeard or

daunted. A complete revolution attended Macready's management; old institutions were swept away, and new rules and regulations established, to the credit of the theatre, before and behind the curtain. For two years he wielded his mimic sceptre with honour and skill. His plays were placed on the boards with taste and judgment, with lavish expenditure, with the best of artists, and with untiring industry in production. As an example, may be adduced the following cast of

'AS YOU LIKE IT.'

Scene-painter, Clarkson Stanfield. Little more need be said of scenic art.

JACQUES, *Macready.*
ORLANDO, *James Anderson.*
TOUCHSTONE, *Keeley.*
WILLIAM, *Harley.*
OLIVER, *Ryder.*
OLD ADAM, *Bartley.*

LE BEAU, *Howe.*
AMIENS, *Allen.*
DUKE, *Cooper.*
BANISHED DUKE, *Elton.*
ROSALIND, *Mrs. Nesbitt.*
CELIA, *Mrs. Stirling.*
AUDREY, *Mrs. Keeley.*
PHŒBE, *Miss P. Horton.*
HYMEN, *Miss Grant.*

'Acis and Galatea,' with wondrous scenery by Stanfield; pantomimes superbly mounted, with slender results, alas! in a monetary point of view. Tired with his arduous undertaking, Macready bade adieu to his government after two years' reign, with heavy losses both in health and purse.

W. J. HAMMOND, of the Strand Theatre, a popular actor. Thanks to Douglas Jerrold's plays and to his own ability, Hammond made money; alas! soon to lose it in the vortex of Drury Lane. If

he had possessed a little less ambition for plunging into a sea of trouble—much beyond his depth—a fortune awaited him in the little 'Strand' Theatre. But no shadow of success followed him to Drury Lane, where his pieces were not nearly as well produced. Of his actors many were talented, but others very mediocre. Pieces unfortunately not calculated to draw brought the season to a speedy end, and poor Hammond's ruin along with it. He died in New York.

BUNN again tried his fortunes with the old house—sorry am I to chronicle, with bad consequences. Empty benches, a series of failures, drove Bunn from Drury Lane to die in Bologne, where he was indebted for his support to the kindly aid of a true friend—Cartwright.

MONSIEUR JULLIEN, a Frenchman, of monster-concerts renown, resolved to tempt

the fickle goddess Fortune : playing a game of hazard with her ladyship, she won, he lost. Mr. Sims Reeves appeared at Drury Lane under Jullien's management, and Alexandre Dumas brought a French company to act in his piece, 'Monte Christo;' this raised a hurricane among idlers, third-rate actors and dependents. Uproars and unmanly disturbances drove the French artists from the theatre. Disgusted with this disgraceful treatment, they left our shores with curses hurled at 'la perfide Albion.' Monsieur Jullien, having lost a large amount, returned to his more profitable band—his 'British Grenadiers' paying better than the British drama! After so many mishaps, he naturally adhered to his gold-mounted bâton.

JAMES ANDERSON resolved to try his fortune by leasing the National Theatre. There always exists a large amount of fas-

cination connected with the management of theatres; each new-comer believes himself to be the man to win—so with James Anderson. He stood the hazard of the die; two years he remained at the head of affairs (1850 and 1851). Unfortunately for himself he gave up the struggle in the Great Exhibition year, sub-letting the theatre to an American equestrian company, McCullock's, who, to use their own dialect, 'made a pot of money.' Literally they cleared thousands by dumb show. Riding bare-backed steeds on one leg brought more money than Kean or Kemble's acting. London being so full of country cousins and visitors from every land to see our 'World's Show,' the Crystal Palace, Anderson produced novelty with a liberal outlay—'Azael,' a spectacle exceedingly well put on the stage, supported by Vandenhoff, Anderson, Mrs. Walter Lacy, etc.; grand ballet; tragedy; a new play,

'Ingomar'—all pleased, but failed to attract.

FREDERICK GYE, manager of the Italian Opera, Covent Garden, rented Drury Lane a few months. After this followed a succession of misfortunes that reduced the finest of theatres to the lowest state of degradation—its noble traditions disgraced!

Three lessees in the same number of weeks had the reckless audacity to open Drury Lane without money or brains: 'Mr. Sheridan Smith,' one week lessee; 'Mr. De Vere,' one week lessee; 'Mr. Bolton,' one week lessee. These gentlemen fled without paying their actors or rent. Such was the pitiful state to which Old Drury was at last reduced, when luckily a man of enterprise came to the rescue.

E. T. SMITH, 1852, elected Lessee by the committee: Earl of Glengall, Lord William Lennox, Lord Tenterden, Sir

Charles Ibbetson, Sir William de Bathe, Captain Painter, C. Coope, Esq., M.P. Rental reduced to £3,500—once £10,000—so had it fallen! Smith, a man of active habits and vast experience in worldly transactions, with a very limited capital, boldly seized the opportunity and succeeded. On Boxing-night, 1852, the curtain drew up to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and a pantomime written by Blanchard, called 'Harlequin Hudibras;' considering the scanty means at Smith's disposal, fairly mounted. A piece of Charles Reade's—'Gold,' an opportune picture of Australian life, just at the time when gold had been discovered in the colony—proved attractive, and Drury Lane rose from the 'slough of Despond.' There was a constant relay of new performers, English and American: E. L. Davenport, Miss Heron, Wallack, Miss Marriott, Betty, Selby, Fanny Vining, Wild, formed a company of fair average

ability. I engaged for three years with Smith, as stage-manager and actor. The first season terminated with a handsome profit. The second commenced with a novel attempt to walk on the ceiling of the theatre head downwards—an American venture. The attempt was carried out, impossible as it seemed. Crowds nightly thronged the house to witness this feat. Smith proposed to me a ready way of making a fortune, thus: He could do what Sands was doing, walk on the ceiling head downwards. I thought he was jesting.

'No, my boy, the trick's in the shoes' (*producing a small box*). 'Sands leaves them here for safety. I've examined them; they have sockets in the soles that slip into clasps fixed on the ceiling. Nothing so easy: we'll go round the country. I'll walk, you take the tin.'

I inquired how the shoes could be obtained?

SMITH (*with a sly wink*): 'Leave that to me; the last night Sands will find them missing.'

The project was never carried out, fortunately for the lessee and his shoes.

GUSTAVUS BROOKE, engaged for tragedy, made a genuine hit. This talented man drew good audiences nightly.

Pantomime, 'Jack and Jill,' produced with increased expenditure. Smith always paid great attention to his Christmas work, well knowing its consequence to his treasury.

THIRD SEASON strengthened our company by the addition of Charles Mathews, Roxby, and the scenic artist William Beverly. I retired, joining the Strand management. Fitzball had written an Egyptian play, entitled 'Nitocrius,' which was accepted by Smith. Much labour and large sums of money were expended, and

a good company, including Barry Sullivan and Miss Glyn, collected for its production. Rehearsals commenced. Mathews (then stage-manager) thought proper to ridicule and ignore 'Nitocrius' *in toto*, scattering Smith's interest to the winds by cutting one act entirely out (there were five), and playing the last act first. Here was alteration with a vengeance. The play failed: could it be otherwise? Two thousand pounds went with it;—large payment for Mr. Mathews's funny joke.

HAVELOCK TESTIMONIAL.—A meeting to raise to this brave and good soldier a statue was held in Drury Lane under distinguished patronage, the Duke of Cambridge in the chair, supported by the Earl of Cardigan, Sir William Williams of Kars, Earl Russell, Sir Macdonald Stephenson, etc. A sum sufficient for the purpose was subscribed, to perpetuate Havelock's gallant deeds in India.

ITALIAN OPERA AT DRURY LANE.—Cheap prices. Mapleson first appeared in Smith's employment as his agent. Verdi, Garcia, Persiani, Gassier, Ronconi, Naudin, Badilla, etc., clever artists, popular operas, very low admission money, failed to induce the public to patronise this venture.

GRAND EQUESTRIAN AMERICAN CIRCUS.—Ring placed on the stage. An extraordinary female rider, 'Mademoiselle Ella,' surprised the town by her marvellous evolutions on two, three, and four horses running at full speed round the ring. The leaps that fair equestrian took, clearing four horses at a time, astonished and attracted large audiences. It was whispered abroad that mademoiselle was not really a *mademoiselle* at all, but a *monsieur* in disguise. Certainly few persons ever saw the lady's features in the day: they were always closely veiled.

CHAPTER IV.

But the great attraction of Smith's management was the appearance of Mademoiselle Rachel, the celebrated French tragedienne, on the boards of Drury Lane, the last time that she ever acted in Europe. The following was the bill of the performances:

'Theatre Royal, Drury Lane,
August 9th, 1855.

Under the patronage of her most gracious Majesty the Queen, for the benefit of the French Charitable Association, the eminent tragedienne,

'Mademoiselle Rachel

has kindly consented to appear for the

last time prior to her departure for America, in the second act of Racine's tragedy of "Athalie."

'On Thursday, August 9th, 1855, will be performed "Le Dépit Amoureux," a comedy in two acts, by Molière.

'After which will be performed the second act of Racine's tragedy,

'"ATHALIE."

ABNER, *Madame Randoux.*
MARTHA, *M. Clere Cheine.*
JOSABETH, *Mademoiselle Duney.*
ZACHANIL, } Sisters to Rachel. { *Mdlle. Dinah Felix.*
JOAS, } { *Mdlle. Sarah Felix.*
ATHALIE, *Mademoiselle Rachel.*

To conclude with the first act of Wallace's opera of "Maritana." In the course of the evening "God Save the Queen" and "Pour la Syrie," a musical mélange, in which Monsieur Blondet will sing, in

character as a Zouave, the cantata "La Guerre." Stage Manager, E. Stirling.' I had the honour of leading Mdlle. Rachel before the curtain, receiving a smile and a charming 'Thank you,' the last words ever spoken by this celebrated woman on the European stage. She died on her return from America, without performing in Paris.

When Mdlle. Rachel was a child, admitted to the Conservatoire, she besought some private lessons from an artist, justly esteemed and of serious talent, M. Provost, sociétaire of the Comédie Française. On seeing the feeble and unhealthy girl, he told her to 'go and sell nosegays' (her original calling in the streets of Paris). The young 'Hermione' charmingly revenged herself one evening, long afterwards, for the contempt of her comrade who had proved so false a prophet. The theatre was crowded, the boxes filled with

the *élite* of fashion, 'Hermione' was called for with great enthusiasm and recalled several times with storms of applause, her Grecian tunic filled with flowers. She ran after her friend, M. Provost, who had advised her to go and sell nosegays. She dropped a curtsey before him with coquettish grace.

'I have followed your counsel, Monsieur Provost, and sell nosegays. Will you buy one?'

This Muse of Israel had graceful coquetries at command for other persons besides disobliging actors. Early in her career Mdlle. Rachel was judged elegant and discreet enough in her manners to be admitted to Madame Recamier's select circle at the Abbey—aux-Recames-Bois—where only that which was finest and most orthodox was permitted to penetrate. Dr. Vernor tells us when within these holy walls, she was ingenious enough to compli-

ment an archbishop to his liking, and to proclaim herself a Jewess. Reciting at the Abbey some scenes from the part of 'Pauline' before M. de Chateaubriand, this scene was interrupted by the unexpected entrance of the archbishop.

'Monseigneur,' said Madame Recamier, a little embarrassed, 'let me present to you Mdlle. Rachel, who is just reading one of the scenes of "Pauline" from Polyeucte.'

'I should be distressed,' was the answer, 'to interrupt the fine verses of Corneille.'

But Mdlle. Rachel, in a delicate scruple, would not go on with the scene before the prelate. She would not cry out as a converted Christian, 'Je vois, je sais, je crois,' not utter a lie (so to speak).

'If monseigneur will permit me,' said she, 'I will recite some passages from "Esther,"' thus remaining, thanks to the drama written by Racine, faithful to the Jewish religion.

When Rachel had concluded, the archbishop praised her most warmly.

'We priests,' said he, 'seldom have the pleasure of approaching the great artists. But twice in my life I have had this enjoyment. At Florence I have heard Madame Malibran in society, and I am indebted to Madame Recamier for an opportunity of hearing Mdlle. Rachel declaim such fine verses so well—we must feel all the sentiments which they express.'

Mdlle. Rachel made the most charming reverence, and looking down, replied gently but firmly :

'Monseigneur, je crois.'

E. T. SMITH asked Balfe to write him an operetta with a ballad or two for Drury Lane, over a dinner, at which the guests were Balfe, Mapleson, and myself. Smith produced a cheque for £200, and placing it on Balfe's plate :

'Here's something, old boy, to give you a relish for dinner.'

ASTONISHED COMPOSER.—'This is the first time in my life that I ever received money beforehand, gold for my notes.'

The lessee replied:

'My dear Balfe, your notes are always so easily cashed by the public.'

AMATEUR ARISTOCRATIC MATINÉE at Drury Lane, 1855, honoured by the presence of the Queen, the Prince Consort, and the Royal children. A musical piece, in which Miss Keeley sang for the first time, aided by her father and mother. The gem of the performances was a real comic pantomime, played by officers and literary men — Biddulph, Lord Mostyn, Twiss, Ponsonby, Albert Smith, Brough, F. Yates, Powell, etc. One scene, the 'Derby Day,' Epsom. The race: basket horses; gentlemen jockeys: Lord Mostyn, red; blue,

Albert Smith, won by two lengths, leaving all the horses and riders sprawling on the ground, to the great amusement of the beholders, her Majesty included. Smith engaged Charles Kean, Webster, etc.; his pantomimes, written by Blanchard, were pre-eminent for fun and scenic excellence.

1862. SECOND EXHIBITION YEAR brought Dion Boucicault and his 'Colleen Bawn' to Drury. A difference with Webster at the Adelphi caused the removal of the Irish heroine to the national boards. A new melodrama, the 'Relief of Lucknow,' with a good cast, and Boucicault's acting, did well. From Drury Lane, the 'Relief of Lucknow' appeared in the Court of Common Pleas, held at Croydon, Judge Bramwell presiding. A Mr. Seaman brought an action against Boucicault for piracy, claiming the title and plot of the 'Relief of Lucknow' as his original idea.

This plea fell through. I was the only witness examined by Montagu Chambers, counsel for Seaman. Bramwell asked me if I knew the plot of the defendant's piece?

'Yes, my lord, I produced it.'

JUDGE (*with MS. before him*): 'Describe it.'

'My lord, it runs thus: Siege of Lucknow, horrors of war, suffering of the gallant defenders, love of course in large quantities, even in that perilous position' (*laughter in court*).

JUDGE (*perusing the MS., smiling*): 'Yes, I perceive there is plenty of love.'

'My lord,' I observed, 'we on the stage cannot get on without it' (*loud laughter, bar and Judge smiled*). 'Terrible fighting, vengeance of rebel Sepoys; miraculous escape; despair of women and children; Irish soldiers, of course abounding in Irish humour; English soldiers true to their

duty; faithful wives; devoted sweethearts; terrible Rajah! just at the critical point when death and capture lie before the besieged, a Scottish girl, gifted with extraordinary powers of hearing, hears in the distance the Highlanders' pipes, 'The Campbells are coming.' Universal joy; troops rush in to the rescue; desperate fighting; old England triumphs; Havelock and Outram embrace amidst the burning ruins; shouts, thunder of cannon, screeching pipes; red fire; garrison saved, more firing; blue fire; God save the Queen! and our curtain falls.'

This description pleased the court amazingly; the crier had some difficulty in proclaiming 'order.'

BRAMWELL: 'I wish our curtain could descend as rapidly. There is no comparison between the two pieces.'

He had Seaman's and Boucicault's manuscripts lying on the desk.

'No, my lord, one is written by a gentleman, the other——'

'Stop, sir,' said Chambers, Seaman's counsel, 'we are not asking your opinion.'

THE LEARNED JUDGE (*looking at the cover of MS., lent by Mr. Lane from the Britannia Theatre, to plaintiff*): 'You swear, sir, that yours is an original composition—your play?'

'Yes, my lord, I do.'

'Listen, sir, to this (*Bramwell, reading*): '"This drama is founded on a copy of verses that appeared in the '*Times* newspaper,' relative to a Highland girl's hearing the distant bag-pipes" (*passing MS.*). Is that your writing, sir?'

CHAP-FALLEN SEAMAN: 'Yes, my lord.'

'Then, sir, you are non-suited, and I am not sure, I believe I ought to commit you for wilful perjury.' Thus 'Lucknow' was relieved from litigation.

E. T. SMITH'S many ventures kept him

poor; the Alhambra Palace, Radnor Tavern, Her Majesty's Opera, Drury Lane, a travelling circus. Then he was auctioneer, wine-merchant, picture-dealer, land-agent, bill-discounter, and Dunmow flitch-of-bacon restorer; a Jack-of-all-trades, and master of none. A Jew friend observed to me:

'Smith, sir, 's a wonderful man, keeps plenty of people in bread, earns lots of money, but can't keep it; none sticks to his fingers.'

He started for Bridport, a candidate for Parliament, gave that up for Bedford, actually opposed the Duke of Bedford in his stronghold, contesting Whitbread's influence for a seat. He polled 101, lost the election, and £2,000. He established a newspaper, the *Bedford Times*, in which he exposed the abuses of endowed schools and charities, as also in his own paper, the *Sunday Times*. His Drury Lane

lease drawing to a close, Smith was anxious to part with it, to avoid the large expense of repairs. He offered it to Boucicault, at a dinner where I myself was a guest, after flattering Dion with certain success.

'Only six thousand pounds, my boy. You walk in, I walk out.'

'Very good, Smith,' said Boucicault, 'I should want you to give me six thousand, and then I should not walk in, but keep out.'

Boucicault had learnt wisdom by experience: a burnt child fears the fire.

Doing a Bill.—Smith wanting cash (who does not?) invited two young guardsmen to luncheon (they are now peers of the realm). After a *recherché* repast, a bill-stamp appeared.

'Now, my boys, just your names to this for £500. Three months, ten per cent. interest.'

The officers laughed.

'By ——, we came here to ask you to do one for us—£1000, three months, at twenty per cent.'

No more words were exchanged; they separated, mutually disappointed with each other.

In one of SMITH'S PANTOMIMES 'Jack and Gill,' in a farm-yard scene, children represented turkeys, ducks, geese, etc. One evening a small boy—a goose, came crying to me, without his bird's legs, telling a pitiful tale against one 'Billy Brown' (a turkey-cock), who had 'whacked him, and 'stole his legs.' Justice was done to the goose, and the fighting turkey-cock had his comb cut.

HARLEQUIN BLUE BEARD.—Bashaw Blue Beard rode in grand procession on a large elephant, in Oriental state. Perhaps it might be well to inform our readers how

stage elephants are made. The body is of basket-work; the legs, canvas; the feet and head modelled; tusks, wood; trunk and tail, wire-work, all covered with canvas and painted. The eyes are glass. Now to give a stage elephant life and motion four men are placed one in each leg. On the present occasion,* one of the legs had been drinking, and entered his hind-leg in a very quarrelsome condition, talking of fighting the left fore-leg for some imaginary affront. Music, march commences, elephant moves, right hind-leg drags—it is sleepy, Blue Beard swearing, manager vowing vengeance.

FORE-LEGS TO HIND: 'Come on, Wilkins, good luck to you.'

Wilkins wouldn't stir. Left hind kicks him. Right kicks again, and loud enough for all to hear, swears 'he'll punch his

* This ludicrous incident occurred at the Adelphi, under Gladstone's management and my direction.

head.' Front legs kick out; at length all get to blows. Blue Beard pitched off; wild yells of laughter; elephant rolls over, all the legs fighting each other. Burlesque could go no further. The audience were convulsed with laughter, and wanted to encore it. I need hardly add that all the legs were discharged, and the elephant cut out.

SMITH let Drury Lane to EDMUND FALCONER, of 'Peep o' Day' celebrity, then crossed the water to Astley's and introduced the female Mazeppa, Adah Menken; re-crossed the Thames to the Lyceum, engaged Miss Neilson, the Vokes Family, Bandmann, etc. This speculation failing, he tried the Surrey, with no better fortune; built a new theatre, 'Elephant and Castle,' but did not succeed in this last theatrical venture. He tried Mining Agency, and a subterranean restaurant in the bowels of

the earth, under the Royal Exchange. For this a license was applied for, but the application met with a refusal. Ruin came in its train, and sickness, followed by death. Thus ended the career of a clever, shrewd man. He aimed, however, at too much. 'Too many irons in the fire' are apt to burn one's fingers, as they did poor Smith's.

'HAMLET' AT DRURY LANE.—E. T. Smith's last season—not a very efficient tragedy company for the minor characters. In the play scene, Lucianus, whose part it was to poison the sleeping king in the garden had only a few lines to speak, and these he had neglected to learn.

Lucianus enters cautiously.

'Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing.'

Pause. Prompter gave the word. Little use: he did not know the rest. He spoke

the speech again, and paused. The audience hissed. (*In a strong Irish accent*):

'I'll pour the *pison* into his ear-hole, that'll do it' (*rushing off the stage*).

It did do for him, depend upon it, with the management.

CHAPTER V.

EDMUND FALCONER AND FREDERICK B. CHATTERTON, joint-lessees of Drury Lane. Falconer, an Irishman and a clever playwright, actor and provincial manager, had realised thirteen thousand pounds at the Lyceum, and rashly embarked his earnings in Drury Lane management. He lost every shilling. He was persuaded to take this perilous step in opposition to Chatterton's more prudent advice. He tried and failed, notwithstanding creditable efforts to attract the public. Plays well produced—company consisting of the foremost tragedy actors—'King John,' First Part of 'Henry the Fourth,' 'Macbeth,' Milton's

'Comus,' all admirably put on the stage. Scenery by William Beverley. Pantomimes with costly expenditure, following the example set by E. T. Smith, who first gave an impetus to Christmas novelties; E. L. Blanchard their clever author and concoctor. Falconer's own productions possessed merit, carefully and scholarly written: 'Extremes,' a comedy; 'Cajot,' 'Death of Montrose,' etc. Nothing drew good houses. At last the doors were closed on the unlucky lessees. Chatterton discharged his own and Falconer's liabilities; bid for Drury Lane, was accepted by a committee, and commenced in 1866, self-made, reliant, bold and resolute! For ten years Chatterton ruled, and a further lease of five years was recently granted to him, an instance of a man's cutting his road from the ranks to a foremost position. He began well. Shakespeare: 'Macbeth,' King John.' Old comedies: Phelps, Walter

Montgomery, Barry Sullivan, Talbot, Warner, Ryder, Swinbourne, Miss Helen Faucit, Mrs. Herman Vezin, Miss Wallis, Miss Neilson, Mrs. Vandenhoff, the Brothers Webb. A version of 'Faust,' poetical and musical, by Bayle Bernard: MEPHISTOPHELES, *Phelps;* MARGUERITE, *Mrs. Herman Vezin.* Miss Helen Faucit's special engagement for twelve nights was honoured by the *élite* of society. Crowded houses came to witness this talented lady's personations of the highest *rôles* in comedy and tragedy—well were they gratified. Her graceful figure, fine tuneful voice, and refined judgment went far to make her perfection, this our first living actress, as Lady Teazle, Portia, Pauline, Julia, Rosalind. Her Antigone stands alone for purity of taste and classic representation. Shakespeare's words describe her:

> 'No jewel is like Rosalind . . .
> All the pictures, fairest lined,
> Are but *black* to Rosalind.'

Miss Faucit kindly sent me the following letter at the conclusion of her engagement:

'31, Onslow-square,

'Oct. 19, 1866.

'DEAR SIR,

'I regretted on Friday night before I left the theatre that I had not an opportunity of expressing to you personally my acknowledgments for your courtesy and attention to my wishes during my late performances at Drury Lane.

'I have been very unwell since Friday, or I should have written earlier to express my thanks to you. Pray accept them now, and believe me, dear sir,

'Yours truly,

'HELEN FAUCIT MARTIN.

'Edward Stirling,

'Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.'

THE BROTHERS WEBB, remarkable for their resemblance to each other, played a

few nights. In the 'Comedy of Errors,' it was difficult to distinguish the one Dromio from the other. The eldest, Henry Webb, died during his engagement at Drury Lane, leaving a wife and three children unprovided for. A benefit at Drury Lane produced £1,200, sufficient to educate the children and assist the widow. Actors and actresses are universally charitable, ever ready to help the sick and needy with personal service or money. All honour to the sock and buck-skin.

WALTER MONTGOMERY supported Miss Faucit in her plays. He was well received by his audiences. Christmas came—as it always will—heralding merry times for home and holidays. The pantomime, the children's favourite dish, was served up daintily by our literary cook, E. L. Blanchard,—'Harlequin Number Nip.'

This brought Chatterton's first season to a conclusion with fair results.

SECOND SEASON, 1867-8.—English opera announced, not performed. The cause, Sims Reeves objected to sing in 'Rob Roy,' pleading ill health; William Harrison did. 'Francis Osbaldiston,' 'Baillie Nicol Jarvie,' acted to the life by Phelps. 'Rob Roy' personated by a real Highlander, James Powrie, an Edinburgh actor of high repute. DIANA VERNON, Miss Cross. Our great tenor, Reeves, paid for his caprice in the law-courts rather heavily, in the action brought by Chatterton for breach of contract—verdict £1,500.

THIRD DRAMATIC SEASON.—In the 'Summer, Mapleson's Italian Opera.' We opened dramatically with a sensation drama of high and low life, by Halliday, called 'The Great City,' introducing Miss Madge Robertson (Mrs. Kendal) to a London audience. This realistic piece had the

advantage of a real cab and living horse, thieves' dens, and burglars on house-tops escaping by telegraphic wires, and many other wonders. Money came into the treasury, the best token of popularity.

An old familiar drama, 'The Miller and his Men,' originally produced at Covent Garden fifty years ago.

FIRST CAST.

GRINDOFF (*the miller*), *Farley.*
LOTHAIR, *Abbott.*
COUNT FRIBURGH, *F. Vining.*
KARL, *Liston.*
RAVENA, *Miss. Faucit.*
CLAUDINE, *Miss Foote.*

It fell flat on its revival at Drury, and was speedily withdrawn.

Bayle Bernard gave us a capital version of Lord Byron's tragedy, 'Marino Faliero,' called 'The Doge of Venice.' Scenery

perfect, reminding one strongly of Canaletti's wonderful pictures of the 'Queen of the Adriatic.' Beverley in this drama excelled all his previous efforts.

When Lord Byron's tragedy of 'Marino Faliero' was first produced at 'Old Drury,' under Elliston's management, it was cried down by the 'saints,' the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dean Ireland at their head, as the work of an infidel. The following notice explains this intolerant persecution: 'Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, Thursday, April 26th, 1821. Lord Byron's tragedy of "Marino Faliero" was received last night with the applause and acclamation which had been anticipated from the high genius of its distinguished author. Its repetition would have been announced for this evening, as a matter of course; but certain persons, on grounds at present incapable of being understood, and which remain to be explained and justified, have

thought fit to obtain an injunction in Chancery against the representation of the play. Under these extraordinary circumstances, further performance of the tragedy must for the present moment be suspended. It is conceived, however, that the impediment thus thrown in the way not only of the interests of the theatre, but of the gratification of the public, can be but of very short duration, and that the piece will before long be again exhibited with the brilliant success which attended its performance yesterday evening.'

'JACK THE GIANT-KILLER,' Boxing-night, to children's great delight and the manager's profit, invented and written by the never-failing Blanchard.

Barry Sullivan tried his skill on 'Richard the Third.' Phelps stood out well in comedy: his Doctor Cantwell in the 'Hypocrite' was a masterly delineation, reminding old playgoers of Dowton. Our

conclusion of the scene, a drama by Colonel Richards, 'The Prisoner of Toulon,' moderately successful.

On Easter Monday was produced Victor Hugo's 'Misérables,' introducing Mr. Charles Dillon to Drury Lane: his 'Belphegor' pleased better, a part that he created at the Lyceum.

Puss in Boots (pantomime) pleased mightily. Blanchard's pen never tires, reminding us of the negro song of 'Old Virginny never tired'; suffice it to say it never tired the numerous visitors, whether boys and girls or 'children of a larger growth.'

Third and Fourth Seasons, 1868-9.—Sir Walter Scott's genius furnished Mr. Andrew Halliday with a subject—the 'King o' Scots,' founded on the 'Fortunes of Nigel.' Phelps played two parts in it—the Solon, James I., and the miser of Alsatia, Trapbois, both powerfully and well.

FOURTH AND FIFTH SEASONS, 1869-70. —A novelty developing the inner life of a questionable class of feminine society, the *demi-monde*, etc. This idea emanated from Boucicault. It was rather a dangerous experiment, but it proved a successful one. 'Formosa' was the title of this drama, taken from the name of an island in the Chinese seas—Formosa, the beautiful. The cast was a good one, comprising such well-known names as H. Irving, D. Fisher, Howard, Bennett, Wright, Rouse, Miss Kate Rogers, Mrs. Billington, Dalton, Hudspeth, which added greatly to its attraction. It had a long run, and proved profitable both to author and manager.

'BEAUTY AND THE BEAST,' supported by the Vokes family, Miss Kate Santley, B. Wright, etc., ran merrily on at Christmas. The Vokes family, with their never-failing humour and activity, caused quite a sensation. This was their first appearance at

Drury Lane; a step up the ladder of Fame, in the right place. 'Peep o' Day' revived brought the curtain down profitably.

CHECK-TAKER AT OLD DRURY.—Denvil, once a good actor, was reduced by necessity to accept this humble position. He had been originally an actor and manager of the Pavilion. Bunn engaged him to act Manfred at Drury Lane, having seen him play Shylock at a small theatre in Kensington. He made a good impression in Byron's play, and by a strange coincidence took checks at the gallery when Manfred was revived by Falconer and Chatterton for Phelps.

A CANDIDATE FOR THE STAGE.—Theatrical managers frequently receive odd applications. The following curious epistle was addressed to myself, and is so odd as to be worth preserving:

'No 35 blomsbry stret

'Wolverhampton

'dear Sir i wright

'these few lines to ask you if you can oblige me With a place in the Stage i can play ither comick or sentinental but cant dance it is years since i played first in Wolverhampton i ave been Burmingham, Nottinam Liverpool an scotlan the last time i played was with Mr. Dillon in hamlet a month ago Sir i ave ritten a play out of my own ead 3 acts an 7 seams i call it ellin brouke the betrayed it is a good play if you will except it you shall ave it on condition that i take ellin in it plase Write an say if you can oblige me or no—an i Wil Wright an say—I[ll] send it—an my cart i remain

'yours obedient servant

'nelly lynn

'to muster stirling manger

'dury lane play-house

'London.'

I did reply (the offer was too inviting to lose), requesting her carte and the plot of the play. In due course they came with the following letter :

'dear sir,

'You ask me for a plot ofe my play i sent it you first seam a sittin rom With fire an gas ned sitting in a cheer talken to himself Mr. Thorymore a neglected luvyer ofe ellins enters the rom bob backthorne a villin ellen With her true luv arthur wood—at a glass doare, florence a ladys companion enter—there is a tuzzle With ned she nocks ned down—bob carry ellin ofe—one act.

'second act a forset with a river an rocks ellin a lying on the grounded With Mr. Thorymore an bob a stairin over her—she asks for Water Mr. Thorymore go's for it, bob goes an stanins by a tree florence Wanders in finds ellin there is a talk—with

bob and florence in wich she pushes bob into the river, then return ellin, they are startled by a Great noys they mak byined —a number of Wild injuns rush in dancin round un ellin crying and grown—they all run ofe bar mary more a lying there ellin speach.

'act second—seam a church-yard With graves enter ned then gos too sleep. ellin an flo enter—speach then go a seam—gardin With a gate ellin flo With ellin leaning on her arm flo leave ellin buy the gate an finds arthur an brings him to nell—spach then go.

'4 seam—sane sittin room as the fust ned lyin on a sofa a nock at dor—arthur an ellin an florence the forgiveness an end—if a recption i sings ome sweet ome.

'Dear sir if this is the way you mean plase tell me as i dont know any other Way—pleas send me Word if you think it will do an Wen i can come an Wat the

Wages are i has—sent you a cart ofe myself as i played in hamlet as a page last Witsuntide.

'NELLY LYNN.

caracters

ned brown	ellins father
Ellen brown	
Mr. Thorymore	a neglected luvyer
bob blackthorne	a villin
florence	
arther Wood	ellens tru luv

an a number of Wild injins—praps you cold put more seams in it—not very short.

a bad Writer
but good Worder.'

Could there exist a doubt, poor girl, of her powers of composition? Writing plays puzzles many wiser heads than Nelly Lynn's.

CHAPTER VI.

FIFTH AND SIXTH SEASONS, 1870-71.—Scott's 'Kenilworth' became 'Amy Robsart' under the pruning-knife of Halliday. Much was done to make this fine production of Scott's genius acceptable in a dramatic form; the experiment had been tried before at Drury Lane, by Bunn, properly calling it 'Kenilworth' (Scott's own title). Queen Elizabeth was then played by Mrs. Bunn. Beverley displayed great taste and talent: the revels held at Kenilworth in honour of Queen Bess's visit to her gipsy earl (Dudley) surpassed all his previous doings. Miss Neilson was a charming exponent of the ill-fated Amy, and won all hearts by her graceful acting.

THE PANTOMIME, 'Dragon of Wantley,' of truly Old English character, afforded scope for the agile gyrations of the now popular 'Vokes family.' Clowns, columbines, and harlequins danced the old year out and the new one in.

SIXTH AND SEVENTH SEASONS, 1871-72. —Scott's 'Ivanhoe,' dramatised by Halliday, a ready scribe at adaptation, dating from the Marischal College, Aberdeen, Dugald Dalgetty's Alma-Mater. Phelps played Isaac, the Jew of York, in a masterly style. Miss Neilson's Rebecca was a picture for a painter's pencil: her lovely features, foreign in cast, graceful bearing, and earnest acting, made the Jewish maiden the main feature of the piece. It was placed on the stage with careful study; real horses, numerous auxiliaries. The *Times* kindly said it was perfect. The scenery as usual by Beverley;

the *mise en scène* by Edward Stirling. 'Tom Thumb' was the Christmas pantomime. 'Rebecca' realised a large sum—some £8,000; more than Sir Walter received for the original romance.

I received the following little billet from Miss Neilson, with her likeness:

'31, Albemarle-street, Piccadilly,
'Nov. 3, 1871.

'My dear Mr. Stirling,

'With the greatest pleasure I enclose you one of my best photos, with my autograph at the bottom.

'Believe me, yours sincerely,

'Lilian Adelaide Lee-Neilson.'*

* While these pages are being finally prepared for press comes the sad news of poor Lilian Neilson's early death, at only thirty years of age, which took place at Paris very suddenly, when she had just returned from her third successful tour to the United States, on Sunday, August 15, 1880, and while she was still in the bloom and prime of her beauty and her genius. Her mortal remains were consigned to

FASHION AND THE BALLET LADY.—For the performance of Shakespeare's 'Antony and Cleopatra,' a large number of girls were engaged to dance in an Egyptian ballet. One of these 'Beauties of the Nile' persisted, in spite of my remonstrances, in retaining her English complexion. 'The colour was so nasty to put on.' I pointed out to her how preposterous she looked, so opposite to an Egyptian's skin.

'What's that to do with my skin?' said she, with the beautiful and amazing absence of logic so remarkable in women. 'One colour's as good as another.' (This was unanswerable.) 'Fashion changes in England, sir; why should not the girls in

their last resting-place in Brompton Cemetery on the following Friday. Her bright face will be missed for a long time by many a playgoer to whom she was unknown personally, but most by those who had had an opportunity of knowing what graces of mind and heart were added to her graces of person. This humble flower is strewn by an admirer on her grave.

Egypt change colour like the rest? I've seen girls change the colour of their hair every year.'

Argument ceased, and I retired, defeate and crestfallen.

EIGHTH SEASON, 1874-5. — Shakespeare came to the fore. 'Antony and Cleopatra' appeared in the flesh on the mimic scene. ANTONY, *James Anderson;* CLEOPATRA, *Miss Wallis*, her *débût.* Andrew Halliday was entrusted by the lessee to cut, alter, and abridge this great work of England's supreme poet. Such is the taste for legitimate plays in our age that managers are obliged to curtail these fine productions simply because the public have neither taste nor patience enough to appreciate them in their integrity and purity. Pageantry, Roman soldiers, Roman galleys, Egyptian soldiers, Egyptian dancing-girls, processions, scenery, noisy

music, filled up the measure of Shakespeare's mutilation. Summary justice followed in the shape of bad houses. A revival of an old Drury Lane spectacle, 'The Cataract of the Ganges,' fell flat, despite its torrents of water, fearless ride up a steep rock, Indian idols, Sepoy troops, a sort of 'Robinson Crusoe' comedy man continually in the way—all to no purpose. Boxing night—night of all nights in the children's calendar—brought a fairy story by Blanchard. 'Jack in the Box' popped out in the nick of time to recoup the manager for his Shakespearian failure.

I proposed to reproduce a favourite melodrama once attractive at Covent Garden, called 'Elizabeth, or the Exiles of Siberia,' founded on Madame Cottin's beautiful story. On inquiry, the play was reported to be out of print, whereupon I consulted a well-known collector, the

late Dr. Doran, from whom I received the following answer:

'Lansdowne Road, Notting Hill,
'January 27.

'DEAR MR. STIRLING,

'Reynolds's play of "The Exile" was never printed. Harris* bought the copyright, and kept the manuscript in his desk; but he must have lent it, as the play was often acted in the provinces. However this may be, it was certainly never printed. Kind regards to Mr. Chatterton.

'Very truly yours,
'J. DORAN.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS!—ROBERT BROUGH—genial, kind-hearted Bob!—always in debt and difficulties—found it necessary to cross the Channel for change of air and to prevent a sojourn in her Majesty's

* Lessee of Covent Garden.

prison (Queen's Bench), so vindictive was a money-lending creditor. E. T. Smith, then proprietor of the *Sunday Times*, gave our poor exile a commission to write for his paper a series of articles entitled 'Brussels Sprouts.' Bobby, panting for a 'dip in the briny,' went to Ostend with that view. On the first day he took a header from the pier. To his horror, when he came up again he found himself face to face with his cruel creditor who had taken a header too.

'This is the way, you rascal, my money goes, is it? I'll lock you up.'

Bob dived again, swam ashore; hastened back to Brussels; secured his goods and chattels, and left by the first train for Paris, leaving the 'Sprouts' to flourish by themselves.

NINTH SEASON, 1874-5.—Severe losses had been incurred during the three

preceding years. This season a spectacular drama was produced, founded on Scott's 'Talisman:' James Anderson, Creswick, Miss Wallis, Miss Kate Vaughan, and a troop of acrobats—a Moorish *fête*, given at Damascus, to please Richard of the Lion Heart; but a lack of female interest unfortunately rendered the piece a comparative failure. Christmas brought the never-failing Vokes family from an American tour, with golden opinions from our cousins across the Atlantic, and gold in their purses to a good amount. 'Aladdin, or the Wonderful Lamp,' was brought out with *éclat* and success.

TENTH SEASON, 1875-6.—A slice of luck came from Erin's Green Isle. Boucicault 'struck oil,' bringing from America his last success—

'THE SHAUGHRAUN.'

This piece, in its dialogue, partakes largely of the author's political feelings. He writes for Ireland and the Irish, as witness his 'Arrah-na-Pogue,' 'Colleen Bawn,' and his 'Flag of Green,' always putting his foot on the Saxon oppressor; of course, his object is patriotism, not popularity. In this really excellent drama we were introduced to a prison on wheels, that actually turned itself inside out, apparently without human agency. It was first introduced in France in the 'Soldier of Fortune,' and cleverly transmitted to Ireland to aid and succour a Fenian prisoner. What a pity such prisons are not realities; we should then be relieved from Fenian complications.

On August 22, 1875 'The Shaughraun' made his bow to the visitors of Old Drury. Conn, the Shaughraun, life and soul of every fair, fun of every funeral, first fiddle at all weddings and parties,

Dion Boucicault; Moya, in love with Conn, Mrs. Boucicault; Shiel, Barry, D. Fisher, Terriss, Miss Rose Leclercq, Miss Dalton, Miss Everard. Messrs. Chatterton and Boucicault netted £14,000 by the production! Conn's acting was perfection, his good-humour and roguery, deliciously flavoured with the Hibernian dialect, pleased all and everybody.

'WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.'—Who has not heard of the famous Lord Mayor of London who turned again from Highgate stone to some purpose? 'Bow Bells' tells all about it. Blanchard handled his subject with love and reverence towards the fortunate merchant and his wonderful cat; his facile pen inclined to city lore throughout the pantomime. Always the principal object, instruction. A voyage to Zanzibar realised poor Dick Whittington's hopes, wealth, and the hand of fair Alice, his master's daughter.

Complimentary benefit to Edmund Falconer.—Morning performance, November 24th, 1875. Mr. and Mrs. Boucicault in 'Colleen Bawn.'

BELMORE TESTIMONIAL BENEFIT, Dec. 15, 1875.

'Alas! all ends not with an ended life,
Those children fatherless, that widow'd wife,
To each and all cry with a bitter cry.
Shall we not hearken? shall we not reply?'

GEORGE BELMORE, an actor of merit, a capital comedian and delineator of character, acted several seasons at Drury Lane, with credit to himself and advantage to the management. Dry and caustic humour was Belmore's chief characteristic; he would have shone in the old days of legitimate comedy. After occupying a foremost position for many years in the metropolitan theatres, tempted by a lucrative offer, he started for America, poor fellow, only to die (acting in Boston but

three times), far from those he loved. His brother and sister artists rallied round his wife and children. The public generously answered this appeal, and a large sum was the result of a united charitable movement. All honour to Christian hearts.

The following is a bill of the performances :

'Third Act, "Married in Haste"—Messrs. H. J. Byron, C. Warner, Howe, Rogers, Miss E. Thorne, Miss Carlotta Addison.

'Song—Charles Collette.

'Second and third scenes, burlesque of "Black-Eyed Susan"—Messrs. Danvers, Dewar, Miss Oliver, C. Weber.

'"The Elfin King"—Mr. Herman Vezin.

'Selection from "Isaac of York"—Miss Loseby, and Mr. Righton.

'Final scene from "Merchant of Venice"—Creswick, Charles Wyndham, Volan, Miss Hodson, Rose Leclercq; and Original Address, Mr. J. Fernandez.

'"Our Boys" (one act of)—W. Farren, D. James, T. Thorne, Sugden, Amy Roselle, Kate Bishop, S. Larkin.

'Selection from "Blue Beard"—Lydia Thompson, L. Brough, W. Edoum.

'"Area Belle"—Toole, Brough, Mrs. Mellon, Leigh.

'"Sairey Gamp and Betsy Prig"—John Clarke, Mrs. H. Stephenson.

'"Wonderful Head"—George Conquest.

'An act of "Weak Woman"—Vernon, Cox, Graham, Miss Swanborough, Marion Terry.

'Song—Mr. Anson.

'"Nicholas Nickleby" (a scene)—Mr. Emery, H. Vaughan, Miss Hudspeth.

'Song—Mr. J. A. Cave.

'"Unequal Match" (an act)—Beveridge, Nelson, Barsby, Anne Lafontaine, Nelly Harris.

'Stage-manager, E. STIRLING.'

SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL SCHOOL AND THEATRE to be established at Stratford-on-Avon. Chatterton gave the theatre towards this national object, Friday morning, April 23rd, Miss Helen Faucit kindly giving her services and playing Rosalind in 'AS YOU LIKE IT.'

Cast: Messrs. Creswick, Warner, Wyndham, Fernandez, Rogers, Pensor, Compton, Lionel Brough, Buckstone, Lilly, H. Payne, Chippendale, Miss Helen Faucit, Henrietta Hodson, A Lafontaine, E. Fitzwilliam. Manager, E. Stirling.

ROYAL DRAMATIC COLLEGE (Benefit), patronised by the Prince and Princess of Wales. This excellent institution was

founded to support twenty-four of the theatrical profession, male and female, after their labours had ended and they were no longer capable of amusing the public. Fortune does not smile on all. The recipients of this bounty were among those who had not basked in the sunshine of her fickle smiles. Old age crept on, in its train bringing necessity. To supply these wants the public were invited to Drury Lane. Programme of entertainment:

'MARRIED LIFE.'

SAMUEL CODDLE, *J. L. Toole.*
LIONEL LYNX, *W. Vernon.*
FREDERICK YOUNGHUSBAND, *Kendal.*
GEORGE DISMAL, *Webster.*
HENRY DOVE, *Buckstone.*
MRS. SAMUEL CODDLE, *Miss Hughes.*
MRS. LIONEL LYNX, *Miss Caroline Hill.*
MRS. FREDERICK YOUNGHUSBAND, *Miss Madge Robertson.*

MRS. GEORGE DISMAL, *Mrs. Leigh.*
MRS. HENRY DOVE, *Mrs. C. F. Mathews.*
Followed by the

'SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL':

SIR PETER TEAZLE, *Mr. Chippendale.*
SIR OLIVER SURFACE, *Addison.*
CHARLES SURFACE, *J. Anderson.*
JOSEPH SURFACE, *Alfred Wigan.*
HOWLEY, *Barrett.*
MOSES, *J. Clarke.*
CRABTREE, *Compton.*
SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, *Buckstone.*
TRIP, *H. Byron.*
SIR HARRY BUMPER, *Penen.*
CARELESS, *Montague.*
SNAKE, *Stuart.*
LADY TEAZLE, *Amy Sedgwick.*
MRS. CANDOUR, *Mrs. Chippendale.*
LADY SNEERWELL, *Mrs. Mellon.*
MARIA, *Miss Stuart.*

Mr. Sothern addressed the audience as follows:

'LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

'I am desired by the committee of the Dramatic College to express their warmest thanks for the great kindness shown by their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, in giving us the valuable privilege of their name and presence this day. I have the pleasure of announcing that the total receipts amount to £448 17*s.*'

ROYAL DRAMATIC COLLEGE, November 1st, 1877.—Resolved by the Life Governors, 'That as it is impossible to keep up the Royal Dramatic College, and provide for its inmates, through want of proper funds for the current expenses, except by selling out the remaining sum, £1,000 Consols, the Council do forthwith take such steps as the Charity Commissioners may

advise to dispose of the property and to provide for the inmates.' Thus terminated an institution, excellently conceived, but very badly carried out. The first stone had been laid by the late Prince Consort. The building was opened by the Prince of Wales, patronised by our Queen, well subscribed to by all our leading artists. Fêtes, benefits, concerts, were constantly given for its support. A stately building, a well-stocked library, comfortable dwellings, were all provided for those past labour; yet it failed: the fatal word 'Finis!' inscribed on its doors, with this

'NOTICE OF SALE.

'The Royal Dramatic College, situated at Maybury, near Woking, in the county of Surrey. An extensive building, pleasure-grounds and garden, ten acres of land, which will be sold by auction 11th July,

1878, under an order of the Charity Commissioners.'

This offer produced nothing—no bid—not one shilling, after all the expenditure and the laudatory puffing of the Press!

A BATCH OF 'COMPLIMENTARY' BENEFITS.—Why are not commonplace things called by their proper names? Is the world grown so mealy-mouthed? or are we too vain to declare what we really are? A benefit means a pecuniary advantage, not the courtesy of compliment.

Benefit, March 12th, 1875, of Mr. Hingston (complimentary).

DRURY LANE.—Philadelphia Centennial Fund. Centenary performance of 'Macbeth,' to commemorate the Independence of the United States, February 4th, 1876. MACBETH, *Mr. Herman Vezin;* LADY MACBETH, *Miss Geneviève Ward.* Shades

of George III. and Washington! if in the flesh would you not shrink from this? The one (king) to give, the other (general) to accept, a complimentary benefit to our rebellious colonies for beating us—casting off the Hanoverian yoke! Burlesque can go very little further than this episode.

Benefit (complimentary) to Miss E. Bufton, on her recovery from a railway accident, from which she obtained damages of £1600.

Benefit to James Guiver (late treasurer).

Benefit to Horace Wigan, for managerial losses.

Benefit to Alfred Wigan—what for? no one could tell—Alfred Wigan by his talents having retired on a handsome competency into private life.

Signor Rossi, Italian Tragedian, ap-

peared at Drury Lane in 'Hamlet,' on Wednesday, April 19th, 1876—HAMLET, *Signor Ernesto Rossi.*

Italian artists supported this accomplished actor: he made a very favourable impression, and won praise both from the press and the public. Critics carped at his restorations from the original folios—passages with us obsolete. Rossi, however, restored many important lines, quite necessary to carry out the author's intentions—such as the dialogue between Polonius and the King, after the Play Scene, now omitted without reason.

June 21st, 1876. Rossi's final performance and benefit.

'An act of "Romeo and Juliet"—Romeo, Signor Rossi.

'An act of "Hamlet"—Hamlet, Signor Rossi.

'An act of "Othello"—Othello, Signor Rossi.

'An act of "Macbeth" — Macbeth, Signor Rossi.

'An act of "Merchant of Venice"—Shylock, Signor Rossi.'

MRS. BILLINGTON.—First appearance at Drury in Boucicault's drama of 'Formosa,' in which she played an honest right-minded country body, mother to the wrong-minded beautiful daughter. Mrs. Billington is always in earnest, and consequently natural. Heavy tragic business, comedy, elderly ladies, are all cleverly acted. I have known her play Hamlet, in Birmingham, for her own benefit, to the surprise if not to the delight of her numerous admirers.

COMPTON'S BENEFIT, 1877.—This clever actor and deserving man, from the pressure of calamitous illness, appealed, through influential friends and his fellow-actors, to the public for a benefit at Drury Lane.

This produced the largest amount ever collected, £5,000, by subscription and performances in London, Liverpool, and Manchester; so much was Compton esteemed. The Queen sent a kind message to our poor player, with a donation. Death came, terminating his troubles. He left a loving wife and family to mourn for a good husband, father, and man.

BENEFIT TO MRS. ALFRED MELLON.—An Act of 'Green Bushes,' Madame Celeste; 'Black-Eyed Susan,' Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, Mrs. John Wood.

The address was written by H. Byron; Mrs. Keeley, H. Irving, Miss Heath and B. Webster took part in the performance. A goodly sum realised, £1,100.

THE 'WHITE CAT' was the pantomime of this season, written by ever-green Blanchard. Age touches lightly this gentle genial penman; the cunning of his craft

remains vivid and fresh as ever. Long may it continue to please and instruct!

In 1812 a 'White Cat' pantomime was played at Drury Lane—Clown, Kirby.

BENEFIT GIVEN TO MR. CHATTERTON at the termination of his season by the profession and public.

'Monday, March 4th, 1878, the performances will commence at one o'clock with the "Rival Showmen"—Messrs. Terry, H. Paulton.

'Mr. Terris will recite the "Fugitive Slave."

'Second act of "OUR BOYS"—Messrs. Farren, Thorne, James, Warner; Miss Roselle, Bishop, Larkin.

'Recitation: "The Whale Fleet," by Mrs. Stirling.

'Song: "I haven't the slightest idea"—Mr. Righton.

'First act of "Richard the Third"—

GLOSTER, *Mr. Henry Irving;* LADY ANNE, *Miss Bateman.*

'Balcony Scene, "Romeo and Juliet"—JULIET, *Miss Neilson;* ROMEO, *Mr. Conway.*

'"Leah"—LEAH, *Miss Bateman;* RUDOLPH, *Mr. Lyons.*

'Grand March, Two Harps—Miss Mary and Annie Chatterton.

'Fourth act of "Jane Shore"—JANE SHORE, *Miss Heath;* JOHN GRIST, *Mr. Emery.*

'"Celebrated Parrot"—Mr. Conquest.

'Fourth act—"Much Ado about Nothing"—BENEDICK, *Mr. H. Neville;* BEATRICE, *Miss Ada Cavendish.*

'Selection from "Nicholas Nickleby"—*Mr. S. Emery, Mr. Terris, Miss Conery, Miss Hudspeth.*

'Last Scene of "Robert Macaire"—Martinelle family.'

This benefit yielded £1,000.

ELEVENTH SEASON commenced with a play in four acts, by Wills, founded on Sir Walter Scott's 'Peveril of the Peak:' 'England in the days of Charles the Second.' Its title did not please, and the venture proved unprofitable.

MISS LEIGHTON first appeared at the 'Queen's,' then a few nights in leading characters at the Haymarket. Her *début* at Drury Lane: Haska in a drama of that name, written by Henry Spicer. 'Haska had to go through an ordeal of law-courts before it was acted. Vice-Chancellor Bacon prohibited its production one day, Vice-Chancellor Malins revoked this judgment the next day. Haska, played well by Miss Leighton, ran a month; Creswick, Count Karolu (no relation to the Hungarian ambassador). Wills's play gave Miss Leighton another opportunity for displaying her ability in

the *rôle* of the Countess of Derby. A new lease for five years granted to Mr. Chatterton, commencing September 1878.

DRURY LANE, TWELFTH SEASON, commenced with Shakespeare's play,

'WINTER'S TALE,'

September 28th, 1878. Principal characters by Miss Wallis, Mrs. Herman Vezin, and Miss Fowler; Charles Dillon, Cowper, Edgar, Compton, and Ryder. A comic opera entitled 'Taming of the Shrew.' Phelps was announced to play a farewell engagement, commencing with Cardinal Wolsey. Death unfortunately prevented this arrangement from being carried into execution. A series of tragedies, 'Othello' 'Macbeth,' etc., were tried only to fail; even Blanchard's pantomime of 'Cinderella' did not attract. On Tuesday, February 4th,

1879, this notice appeared on the doors of the theatre :

'Owing to a combination of unforeseen circumstances this theatre is unavoidably closed for the present.

'F. B. CHATTERTON,

'Sole Lessee and Manager.'

A benefit raised for the Chatterton family £800. Chatterton's debts amounted to £36,000. At one period he had netted £45,000. A sad contrast this profit and loss.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER eight months' interregnum, Old Drury's portals reopened to Augustus Harris (a son of the talented man who so many years managed the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden). Mr. Harris is the youngest lessee that Drury Lane ever had to govern its destinies, being still under thirty years of age. His difficult task commenced well, November 6th, 1879. William Rignold and his company played for a short period in Shakespeare's 'Henry the Fifth,' Rignold himself acting 'Harry of Monmouth' with great ability. Rignold had previously made a successful tour with 'Madcap Harry' in America and Australia. His venture at Drury Lane, despite dis-

couraging reports of Shakespeare's plays bringing ruin and bankruptcy in their train, proved quite the contrary.—Christmas, a capital pantomime, 'Blue Beard,' with novel scenic effects: shipwreck, beautiful ballets, sea-serpent, low comedy, baby elephant, the clever Vokes family. The Great Bashaw died a novel death *à la* Punch, chanting 'Toot-te-too.' At Easter 'Madame Angôt' made her curtseys from saloons to the Patent Theatre. Mademoiselle D'Anka, Miss Berville, Sullivan Wilford Morgan; a first-rate band, conducted by an able musician. 'Wallenstein. This opera-buffo, preceded by 'Lady Audley's Secret,' with Miss Moodie as heroine; a grand ballet-d'action, 'Les Sirènes,' produced with new scenery, magnificent costumes and decorations, and good corps-de-ballet, excellent music, Mademoiselle Palladino, Miss Percival Hudson, Fisher, etc., succeeded in drawing for nine weeks capital audiences to Old Drury.

Miss Litton, and her well-selected, deservedly popular company, together with scenery, dresses, music, properties, etc. from the Imperial Theatre, commenced a summer season most favourably. The boards of the time-honoured Drury seldom, if ever, were better filled than by the performances of 'As You Like It,' proving beyond cavil that Shakespeare is not defunct or obsolete.

'Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.'

MILTON.

Miss Litton's company, 'As You Like It.'

DUKE, *Mr. F. Everill.*

AMIENS, *Mr. Coventry.*

JACQUES, *Herman Vezin.*

DUKE, *Frederic Coe.*

LE BEAU, *Charles.*

TOUCHSTONE, *Lionel Brough.*

OLIVER, *E. F. Edgar.*

JAQUES, *Stephens.*

ORLANDO, *Kyrle Bellew.*
ADAM, *W. Farren.*
CORIN, *Bunch.*
SYLVIUS, *C. Trevor.*
WILLIAM, *Bannister.*
ROSALIND, *Miss Litton.*
CELIA, *Miss Creswell.*
PHŒBE, *Miss Roberts.*
AUDREY, *Miss S. Hodson.*

Miss Litton's performance of Rosalind deserves all the encomiums that have been by press and public so lavishly bestowed on it. It is a personation of one of Shakespeare's best female characters, gracefully embellished by excellent acting, thoughtful study, united to rare tact; a portrait from the Shakespearian gallery not to be forgotten.

Orlando, Kyrle Bellew, fresh-spirited and manly, is a fitting lover for such a Rosalind. Touchstone's quaint humour lost none of its racy flavour by Brough's interpretation of this first of Shakespearian

jesters. Brough's Touchstone tastes of the crude conceit and humour of the jesters Skelton, Tarlton, etc. Miss Litton's performances closed July 10th, 1880, with 'She Stoops to Conquer,' Drury Lane concluding the longest season on record. The next Shakespearian revival will be 'Much Ado about Nothing,' to be put on the stage with the same attention to detail, so necessary for the accurate representation of our great bard's immortal works.

The Saturday morning performances of genuine English comedies—'She Stoops to Conquer,' 'The Rivals,' 'Beau's Stratagem,' etc., with powerful casts—Miss Litton, Miss Merrick, and Mrs. Stirling Messrs. W. Farren, K. Bellew, L. Brough, Edgar, Atkins, Charles, Stephens, were patronised substantially by the public, indicating a revival of taste for the higher class of drama.

DRURY LANE present season commenced July 31st, 1880, the earliest date on

record for the opening of a winter season. This event inaugurated a cleverly constructed sensational drama in nine tableaux, each a piece in itself; clearly arranged plot, invented by A. Harris; terse telling dialogue, written by Messrs. Merritt and Petitt; scenic appointments of great excellence, aided by good acting, a well selected company having been engaged to fill 'The World' with wonder. Such names as A. Harris, G. Rignold, Harry Jackson, Harcourt, Mathewson, Gibson, etc., Miss Helen Barry, Fanny Josephs, Miss Brough, could not fail to attract. The popularity of this capital realistic drama is attested by the nightly crowds of delighted spectators: the walls of Old Drury re-echo again and again with their applause and merriment. This mimic 'World' (the best of all tests for a manager) fills the treasury. Long may it do so! Employer and employés deserve it.

CHAPTER VIII.

HER MAJESTY'S OPERA at Drury Lane; Director, Mr. Wood. One season. Mr. Mapleson continued Italian Opera performances for several seasons, until he re-opened Her Majesty's Theatre: E. Stirling, Manager; Signor Arditti and Sir M. Costa, conductors.

ITALIAN OPERA AND ORATORIOS.—In the seventeenth century. The earliest attempt to establish it in England was made by Sir William Davenant, in 1658. He produced the first Italian Opera ever performed in this country. After the Italian manner was produced at Drury Lane, 1705, an

opera called 'Assinoe, Queen of Cyprus.' The first opera performed in the Italian language, and by Italian singers, was 'Almaide,' in 1710.

Handel in 1710 composed for Aaron Hill the opera of 'Rinaldo.' In 1717 a fund of £50,000 was raised by the first personages in the kingdom, to establish a Royal Academy of Music. The Italian Opera in the Haymarket failed, ruining the managers, Hill and Handel. In 1723, Francesca Cuzzoni came out; her rival, Faustina Bordoni, two years after. Italian Operas were removed to Lincoln's Inn Fields Playhouse. Here appeared the famous singer Farinelli: Pacchieotti followed. These celebrated artists by turns delighted the town, yet failed to make operatic ventures profitable. Madame Catalani, Madame Bauti, Mademoiselle Grassini, and our own unrivalled Billington, sang from 1793 to 1802, much to

their own profit, with but little gain for the various managers. For many years the Italian Opera was a bad speculation; the salaries monstrous; the expenses large—greatly dependent on subscriptions of the nobility and gentry. This fashionable enjoyment partakes largely of the habits of old Plutarch's days, with reference to entertainments in languages unknown to the native public. Such is our English Italian Opera: the audience being generally ignorant of the language, cannot well comprehend the plot. Singers' cadences or dexterity of musicians cannot touch the heart or faculties of thought.

'Iphigenia in Aulis,' an Italian Opera, by Paolo Rolli, composed by Nicolo Porpora, for the British nobility, 1735, at the theatre in the Haymarket.

Sir John Vanbrugh's first comedy,

'The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger,' 1691, acted with great applause. He was an able architect, and built our first regular Opera House in the Haymarket, for which purpose he raised a subscription among thirty persons of quality of £100 each; in consideration, every subscriber for his own life was to be admitted to whatever entertainment should be publicly exhibited there without further payment. The building was finished in 1706.

PUPPETS AND NOTIONS.—Fantoccini and immortal Punch were brought first to England in the reign of Elizabeth. Fantoccini were life-size. In Charles II.'s time puppet-plays pleased court and city; actually drew the audiences from the Italian Opera (then established); the great singer, Signor Grimaldi, was beaten

for a time by Punch. Powell, the English puppet showman, made a fortune by his wooden performers. His houses were crowded with his notion of Dr. Faustus, the public leaving tragedy and comedy, flesh and blood actors, for puppets of wood. They were more easily managed than their living brother and sister artists, and far less expensive.

In ridicule of the taste then prevailing for Italian Operas and singers in 1762, 'An Ode to St. Cecilia,' was performed at her Majesty's Theatre and Ranelagh House, adapted to the ancient British music, viz., the salt-box, jew's harp, marrow-bones and cleavers, hum-strum, hurdy-gurdy, by Bonnell Thornton.

'Yield, yield, ye fiddlers, French, Italians :
Yield, yield, I say again, rascalions !
One, two, three times I say, fiddlers give o'er ;
Yield ye, I now say times one, two, three, four.

'RECITATIVE.

'The meaner melody we scorn
Which vulgar instruments afford,
Shrill flute, sharp fiddle, bellowing horn,
Rumbling bassoon, or tinkling harpsichord.

'AIR.

'Each ruddy-breasted robin
The concert bore a bob in,
And every hooting owl, around
The croaking frogs,
The grunting hogs,
All, all, conspired to raise the enlivening sound.

'RECITATIVE.

Now to Cecilia, heavenly maid,
Your loud united voices raise
With solemn hymns to celebrate her praise;
Each instrument shall lend its aid,
The salt-box, with chattering and clapping, shall sound;
The iron lyre [Jew's harp]
Buzzing twang with wavering wire;
With heavy hum
The sober hurdy-gurdy thrum—
And the merry marrow-bones ring round.

'GRAND CHORUS (*Female*).

'Such matchless strains Cecilia knew,
When audience, from their heavenly sphere,
By harmony's strong power she drew,
Whilst listening ANGELS gladly stoop'd to hear.'

Old Magazine, 1762.

The destruction by fire of Her Majesty's Theatre brought Mapleson and his Opera Company to Drury Lane. James Mapleson is a noteworthy example of what a man may achieve with talent and industry. He had the tact to 'seize the tide before it ebbed.' Originally in a very humble capacity in the orchestra of Drury Lane, by a chain of fortunate circumstances he becomes a master; his vocal advent, Alfonso in 'Masaniello,' did not add to his fame. Count Florenstine in 'The Bohemian Girl' was his next attempt, at the Princess's. His connexion with E. T. Smith gave him the first rise in the world, coupled with an introduction to Mademoiselle Teresa Titiens. Instead of serving others he now served himself: became director of Italian Opera at Her Majesty's Theatre, Covent Garden (with Gye) and Drury Lane.

MAPLESON'S FIRST SEASON, DRURY LANE, introduced Mademoiselle Titiens, Mademoiselle Kellog (American), Ilma de Murska, Signor Mongini, Santley, Ronconi, Foli, Bettini, Trebelli; Sinico, etc., Arditti, conductor; E. Stirling, manager.

Mapleson joined Gye; their united companies performed at Covent Garden. This musical harmony speedily produced discords. 'Tweedle-dee' could not agree with 'Tweedle-dum.' The *duo* arrangement failed to please either rival star—Adelina Patti, Gye's artiste; Christine Nilsson, Mapleson's. Such powerful luminaries could not shine in the same hemisphere; one Royal Italian Opera was not large enough for both!

JOHN WOOD (Cramer and Beale) tried an operatic season. Drury Lane that season cost upwards of £20,000. Paying monstrous terms to these foreign singers is

not the least of a director's trouble: temper, caprice, feigned illness, must be taken into account, frequently causing the change of opera twice in a day. Nilsson played 'Mignon,' Santley the 'Flying Dutchman;' Arditti conducted.

Mapleson returned to his old quarters at Drury Lane. Sole manager this time, he wisely secured the services of Sir Michael Costa, the first conductor in Europe, a musician of the highest character—composer of 'Mark,' 'Nathan,' 'Eli,' etc. His control of efficient bands amounts to a marvel—such skill! such command! His presence brought frequent visits from the royal family and the *élite* of society.

Mdlle. Christine Nilsson followed Mapleson's fortunes to Drury Lane. Alone she now shone! a star of the first magnitude, in her own hemisphere, undisturbed.

Mdlle. Nilsson's early career was most humble. Her parents were peasants: her home a village or commune in Sweden. Schooled in poverty, compelled to earn a living; this she did cheerfully. Her future talents were foreshadowed by her excellent voice and natural gifts. Wandering from town to town, playing on the violin and singing, accompanied by a little brother, worked this subsequently great artist. All honour to her! Fortunately, a French lady artist of eminence, travelling in Sweden, heard her singing at an inn door; struck with her manner, and the beautiful quality of her voice, she sought Christine's parents and arranged with them to let her go to Paris, to study music and receive instruction. To this her father agreed. Nilsson was placed in the Conservatoire as a pupil. She rapidly acquired knowledge, and now occupies the highest position in her art—Italy, France, Russia, America, and England

attest this fact. Socially she is much esteemed, counting among a numerous circle of friends the first personages in the land. With laudable pride her old violin, that she first attracted notice with, is kept under a glass shade in her salon. A loving child to father and mother, a good sister and a faithful friend, is Christine Nilsson.

MDLLE. TERESA TITIENS (Queen of Song).—Titiens was born at Hamburg, Germany. From the earliest age she displayed extraordinary capacity for music. After a provincial course of practice in the smaller towns, she appeared in Vienna. Here she had a great advantage at the School of Music. A severe course of study and unremitting industry rapidly brought this remarkable artiste to the foremost rank—universally pronounced one of the best European vocalists. This, united to dramatic powers seldom equalled, but so

essential to produce effect on the lyric stage, rendered the young artist a feature in all the capitals of Europe. Her Fidelio, Norma, Leonora, Lucrezia Borgia, Semiramide, etc., stand without rivals on the Italian operatic stage. Titiens was the only legitimate successor to Grisi, and in some performances her superior.

In 1875 she sailed for America, tempted by a liberal offer. This proved a false step, not professionally, but as regards health. On her return the reception she met with was enthusiastic; but it soon became too painfully evident that the great artist's powers were declining; but with the true loyalty of a woman, she resolutely sang through pain and failing health. At Her Majesty's Theatre (Mapleson, director), she sang but four times in 1877; sickened, and speedily died, October 3rd, 1877. Curiously, she appeared in Vienna first in 'Lucrezia Borgia,' and that character was

her last at Her Majesty's Theatre, May, 1877. Thus departed Teresa Titiens in harness, loving and loved, 'chief among equals.'

MAPLESON, ever on the alert for novelty, announced a series of Italian and French plays on the off opera nights. This arrangement introduced that highly-gifted woman, Madame Ristori, and Signor Tomaso Salvini to London audiences, the former after an absence of some years. Ristori is the first living tragic actress in the world. Her Bianca in 'Fazio,' her Lady Macbeth, Mary Stuart, Queen Elizabeth, and Marie Antoinette, were personations of the highest merit—not mere acting, but reality. These opposite personages lived and talked before us in their life, so closely did Ristori imitate nature. Lady Macbeth's sleeping scene was terribly effective—her haggard conscience-stricken look — those little

hands stained with Duncan's blood—her intense agony to remove the 'damned spots' depicted in her woe-begone features — it was a fine study of human passion, albeit a painful one—so truthful, so realistic. Her crowning triumph awaited her in 'Marie Antoinette.' This drama was written expressly for Madame Ristori, and well she deserved the honour. In a brief hour or two, a panoramic life of the poor queen passed before us—the time, the place, the events of that wild revolutionary period—France convulsed to the very centre—the dying throes of her ancient monarchy—the triumph of republicanism—the heroic daughter of Maria Theresa lived again to suffer, to die. From Tuileries to Temple, Ristori never omitted the proud Austrian's sense of dignity and high estate—Queen in her prison cell, with an ineffable scorn for the rabble of wretches that surrounded her. As wife, mother, martyr, Marie Antoinette

found a faithful exponent in Madame Ristori's splendid conception and truthful delineation of the sufferings of this persecuted queen and heroic woman. Ristori came of a dramatic race—her grandfather, her father, and all her immediate relations were on the stage. After many years' hard practice, her fame, great in Italy, reached France, where Rachel was then the idol of Parisian *cafés*, critics and *salons*. Fould, Minister of the Interior, prevailed with Ristori at last, after much negotiation. She appeared at the Théâtre Français in 'Marie Stuart,' and was enthusiastically received, fêted by all the courts in Europe, and decorated by the Emperor of Germany. Medea, Myrrha, and Francesca da Rimini, are high specimens of genius, art, and nature—

'For Art may err, but Nature cannot miss.'
DRYDEN.

PRINCE PONIATOSKI, musical amateur,

gave a morning concert in 1874, presiding in the orchestra for his own compositions. The death of Napoleon III. placed this prince in difficulties; that which had been merely an amusement now became a necessity. The concert, patronised by the nobility, etc., proved profitable to the exile from Poland, son of the brave soldier who perished in the fatal invasion of Russia by the first Napoleon. On the retreat of the grand army from Moscow, Poniatoski was drowned in the Beresina; his last words uttered for Napoleon, 'Vive l'Empereur!' All honour to the brave!

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH IN THE DARK. —During a performance of 'Marta,' the Duke found himself blockaded by set scenes on the stage; there was no reaching his box before the act-drop fell. I saw his Royal Highness's dilemma, and asked him if he wished to cross to his box.

Yes.'

'Follow me, sir.'

I led him through dark passages, until we came to one totally devoid of light; fearing he might run against the scenery, I inquired if he was afraid of the dark?

'No, I'm used to it.'

'I'll be your pilot then,' said I.

'All right, go ahead.'

We reached his box safely. Bowing, I departed with, 'Your Royal Highness is in safe water now.'

He laughed heartily, thanking me for my polite attention.

English Lords (theatrical).—A young man who had seen better days applied to me for temporary employment. I placed him in 'Il Talismano,' as one of the English lords attendant on 'Cœur de Lion,' in pursuance of the advice of our super-master, whom I had asked to indicate some position in which he could not possibly do harm, not having rehearsed.

'Sir,' replied the super-master, 'put him among them English lords; they're a stupid lot, and have little to do for their money—like 'em all.'

This I told to a real (Burke's Peerage) lord, then a member of Mr. Gladstone's Government. He gave a faint smile, but did not agree with our super-master's ideas.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR CANE.—A celebrated Italian composer and conductor in his early career was greatly sought after by the *élite* of society. Paying a *tête-à-tête* visit to a lady of quality, the composer forgot to carry away his cane (a remarkable one, well known to the musical world). The next day his cane was returned by my lord, the husband, with a note:

'SIR,—When you favour my lady with a visit again, don't forget your cane,

'Yours,

'M——.'

CHARLES SANTLEY.—This clever vocalist came out at Covent Garden, in Pyne and Harrison's Opera; his first appearance as Hoel in 'Dinorah.' The opening cadence stamped his reputation: Italian or English, he is acknowledged to be the first baritone of the time. Sir Michael Costa, no mean authority, told me that Sims Reeves and Santley were equal to any musicians in the world. Santley sang in Italian Opera at Drury Lane several seasons, but gave up operatic for concert singing. He was, and is, one of the brightest ornaments of our musical world.

THE SHAH OF PERSIA AT HER MAJESTY'S OPERA.—This King of Kings, Lord of Lords, First Cousin to the Sun, Brother of the Moon, this mighty Oriental potentate abandoned for a time his gardens of Shira, Bulbuls, roses, and Peris, to visit grim, dusty old London. The public were dazed by the glitter of his priceless jewels: diamonds,

rubies, emeralds, large as pigeons' eggs, bedecked this 'Light of Light's' attire, much to the disgust and envy of Jew and Gentile. The Shah took a comfortable nap in the Royal box during the opera, and woke up quite gaily for the ballet. He evidently was more at home at this, and appeared pleased. It was rumoured that he wanted a dozen or two of the ladies of the ballet to emigrate to Persia. Of course this offer could not be entertained for a moment. At all events, the illustrious visitor was a better judge of legs than of notes (musical).

By Command of Her Majesty.

First act of 'La Traviata'—Violette, Mdlle. Nilsson.

Second act of 'La Favorita'—Leonora, Mdlle. Titiens.

First act of 'Mignon.'—Mignon, Mdlle. Nilsson; Frederic, Mdlle. Trebelli Bettini.

Conductor, Sir Michael Costa.

CHAPTER IX.

THE following opera season we produced a work of Balfe's—his first and only attempt at Italian Opera composition, entitled 'Il Talismano.' Mdlle. Christine Nilsson played Edith; Mdlle. Marie Roze, Queen Berengaria.

'Il Talismano,' with superb costumes and scenery, and *mise-en-scène* novel and extensive, drew good houses and pleased critics and public, always favourable to Balfe's telling music. 'Beverley painted scenery of artistic delicacy and merit. Sir Michael Costa conducted and prepared the opera for production; every possible adjunct the management freely bestowed on this

work. The stage business is admirably cared for by Mr. E. Stirling, who, not for the first time, has been more or less directly concerned in helping to get up an opera of Balfe's.' So wrote the leading journal.

This operatic season a vexed question was decided, concerning the Music of the Future, by the production of

WAGNER'S 'LOHENGRIN,'

which was received with marked enthusiasm, fully meriting the hearty applause bestowed upon its first representation.

Scenery, Beverley; *mise-en-scène*, E. Stirling.

CAST.

ELSA DE BRABANT, *Mdlle. Christine Nilsson.*
LOHENGRIN, *Signor Campanini.*
FREDERICO DE TELEAMONDO, *Signor Galossi.*
ENRICO, *Herr Behrens.*

AVALDO, *Signor Costa.*
ORTRUDA, *Mdlle. Titiens.*

The plot is laid at Antwerp, A.D. 943. The Sultan of Zanzibar honoured us by a visit; he shone less resplendently than his brother Eastern monarch, but his dusky Highness appeared to enjoy our bill of fare, not rudely sleeping over Verdi and Donizetti's strains as the august Brother to the Sun did.

TOMASO SALVINI, Italian tragedian, Italian artiste of the highest grade. The appearance of Salvini on the time-honoured boards of Old Drury marked an epoch in our histrionic annals. Without puff or managerial flourish, this genuine actor came out. A fine figure, regular and handsome features, graceful and easy deportment, a voice most musical (he had originally sung in opera). All these and many other graces were brought to bear in 'Othello.'

The public were taken by surprise, never anticipating such a performance--a foreign actor playing Shakespeare's great creation in a language little known. Genius overcame all these obstacles, and his listeners sat spell-bound for three hours to witness this remarkable performance. Again and again he was called and recalled to receive their approbation. Salvini placed the Moor's conduct to Desdemona in a new light; his motive power love all-ending. Slow to believe Iago's aspersions, still more reluctant to realise them, his clinging to the thought that she could not be false was most natural; slowly the terrible poison crept into his soul; then revenge, deadly and direful, ruled his mind. This gentleman proved Mapleson's best card in the season of 1875. He appeared April 1st, and repeated Othello on the 2nd and 3rd with his company of Italian artistes to overflowing audiences.

Mapleson announced his last season at Drury Lane, having secured an eligible site for a New Opera House on the Victoria Embankment. Anxious to distinguish his last performances at Drury Lane, he produced Wagner's 'Lohengrin.' Mapleson's hopes were doomed to be disappointed. The New Opera House remains still unfinished. He returned to Drury Lane for the season of 1876, with this explanation: 'The Director deems it his duty to explain to the nobility and gentry and the public the reason why the performances will again be given at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, pending the completion of the Grand National Opera House, the works for which are in active progression on the site he had the good fortune to secure. Unforeseen causes have militated against the opening of the New Opera House*

* The 'Victoria Embankment Grand National Opera House' remains *in statu quo*, and is likely to do so. Upwards of £50,000 lies uselessly expended, exemplifying the fallacy of human promises.

this year: the unexpected works for the foundation—the second contingency, a winter of very great severity, and which completely stopped the works. Mr. Mapleson is in a position to state confidently that although the coming season will be comparatively brief, it will be brilliant; for owing to the unusually late season, he will be enabled to present on the earliest nights of performance the leading artistes of his company: Mdlle. Nilsson, Mdlle. Titiens (after her brilliant tour in America), Mdlle. Chapuy, Mdlle. Varesi, Mdlle. Trebelli, Mdlle. Rodelin, Mdlle. Macritz, Signor Fancelli, Signor Campanini, Signor Dorini, Rota del Puenti, Galassi, Signor Faure, Rokitansky, Sir Michael Costa.'

This was the last company assembled for Italian opera at Drury Lane, removed in 1877 to Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket. This circumstance proved a great loss to the lessee.

Opening night, Saturday, April 29th, 1876, 'FAUST.'

MARGARETTA, *Mdlle. Christine Nilsson.*
FAUST, *Signor Stagno* (his first appearance).
MEFISTOFELE, *Mons. Faure.*

Return from America of Mdlle. Titiens.
May 2nd, 1876, 'Semiramide.'

SERIRAMIDE, *Mdlle. Titiens.*
ARSACE, *Mdlle. Trebelli.*

Titiens was received by a crowded audience with rapturous enthusiasm; but, as already stated, her voice had seriously suffered from her transatlantic tour.

June 8th, 1876, a matinée was tried—a morning performance of Mozart's great work, 'Don Giovanni.'

DONNA ELVIRA, *Mdlle. Nilsson.*
DON GIOVANNI, *Mons. Faure.*
DON OTTAVIO, *Signor Stagno.*
IL COMMENDATORE, *Herr Behrens.*

LEPORELLO, *Herr Rokitansey.*
MASETTO, *Signor Fiorini.*
ZERLINA, *Mdlle. Trebelli.*
DONNA ANNA, *Mdlle. Titiens.*

This performance realised fully £800, proving the increasing taste for morning performances, whether operatic or dramatic. It is only a return to the custom of the Elizabethan days. Theatres were then opened at two, and performances commenced at three o'clock. Our ancestors were wise in their generation.

'TRUTH-TELLING.'—A Royal Duke's opinion of the two Italian directors, relative to speaking the truth :

G—e and M———n.
M———n cannot tell the truth.
G—e will not.

Last performance of Her Majesty's Opera at Drury Lane, Saturday, 22nd June, 1876. Benefit of Titiens (her last).

'Fidelio.'—Fidelio, by Mdlle. Titiens.

Overture to 'Leonora.'

Ballet divertissement—'Une Fête de Pêcheurs.'

FAREWELL PERFORMANCE.

Monday, June 24th, 'Don Giovanni.' Benefit of M. Faure.

The Opera ought to have remained at the National Theatre; not only was it profitable, but it gave the establishment a prestige. Suffice it. 'When the cause is lost, there is enough of words.' During Mapleson's operatic management from time to time, he introduced ballets under the direction of a clever female professor, Madame Lanner.

GARRICK in 1755 tried to introduce a ballet (company, French and Italian) composed by M. Noverre. The town had for some time been murmuring at Garrick's avaricious disposition, and his grudging the expense attending the necessary deco-

rations of the stage, dancers, gay scenery, etc., to please the public. Noverre was engaged; a ballet entitled 'The Chinese Festival' was prepared for representation, and much money was expended. The piece was eighteen months in rehearsal. During this time war had been declared between France and England. Here then arose an opportunity for the private enemies of the manager (such every manager must have) to exert their malevolence. Paragraphs were repeatedly inserted in the newspapers to the effect that the manager of Drury Lane had engaged a troop of Frenchmen to play at the Patent Theatre in London, at the very time that England had declared war with France. They did not scruple to add that the dresses, carpentry, etc., were French. In consequence of these advertisements, though honoured by his Majesty's presence, the performance was hissed and

hooted; a contest arose, leading to uproar and blows, for and against the Ballet. In vain the manager protested; rioting continued for six nights, and considerable damage was done to the theatre, the mob venting their fury also on Garrick's house in Southampton-street: the civil and military authorities saved it from demolition. The Ballet was withdrawn, with a loss of some thousands of pounds. Such was public taste in 1755.

THE MANAGEMENT OF ITALIAN OPERA.—From its first introduction in 1658 up to the present day, the Italian Opera has never proved very lucrative (Messrs. Gye and Mapleson excepted).

Sir Wm. Davenant.	Sir John Vanbrugh.
Hill.	Chambers.
Handel.	La Porte.
Lumley.	Laurent.
Sequin.	E. T. Smith.

LUMLEY made a lucky hit with Jenny Lind, the Swedish Nightingale, originally engaged by Bunn for Drury Lane. Lumley realised vast sums by this extraordinary singer's performances in town and country, but lost many thousands by other speculations, though largely assisted by a musical amateur (the Earl of Dudley). All the other directors were ruined, and to them may be added Delafield, at the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, who lost £100,000 in two or three years.

LAURENT, a Frenchman, was a dashing speculator at one period. He had a theatre in Paris, one in Brussels, several in Italy, and Her Majesty's Opera House, London. All failed, and little wonder; he had too many irons in the fire. Kelly, Gould, Waters (an opulent merchant), tried their luck in succession; the last-named lost £90,000. It is singular that no record

has been published of the speculations and uniform disaster and failure attending directorship of Her Majesty's Opera. Nothing is more unaccountable than the fate of its varied lessees. Mapleson's career up to the present time is beyond doubt (fortunately for him) successful. His enterprise and talent deserve it.

OPERA SINGER.—In 1774 Gabrielle was in St. Petersburg; the price she demanded was £1,500 per season, besides a house and carriage; nor would she take less. She was remonstrated with on the enormous salary; they assured her that a Field-Marshal had no such pay.

'If that is the case,' said the artist, 'I would advise all her Majesty's Field-Marshals to sing, and get it.

THE CARRIAGE ENTRANCE to Drury Lane Theatre in 1787 was through a narrow passage leading from the Strand,

called Drury Court, now paved, opposite St. Dunstan's Church.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU writes: 'I intend to go to Goodman's Fields on Saturday to see Garrick act Richard the Third. At night I go to see Mrs. Woffington act Sir Harry Wildair in the "Constant Couple," at Drury Lane.' Her ladyship evidently liked the drama. Our modern ladies of quality would think it rather fatiguing to see two plays in one day, East and West too!

LADY MONTAGU'S opinion of the Italian Opera was not quite favourable: 'I was at the Opera on Saturday night, where was all the world. I was very well diverted between the opera and the audience, or I ought rather to say the spectators; for they came to *see*, not to *hear*. I heard that the elephant was the finest thing in the opera; but that was contradicted, and the burning

temple was preferred to it. To accommodate everything to the absurdity of the town, the dancing is rendered more ridiculous and grotesque than ever. I was thinking if the Court of Augustus Cæsar could have seen the polite part of our nation admiring a wooden elephant with lamps stuck in his head for eyes, and poor Scipio and Asdrubal could have risen to have seen themselves covered with silver spangles, and quavering an Italian air, what honest indignation and scorn would they have conceived at us! Scipio would be mighty pleased to see himself represented as the slave to a simple, poor creature made of song, silk, and civility. I think it is monstrous that these people should trifle thus with great names; it lessens the regard people should have for exalted virtue; and having filled the large book of Fame, is it not hard they should suffer their names to be squeaked in treble notes?

Is it not better to be forgotten than to be remembered in the book of Folly ?'

'"ARTAXERXES," Opera, 1762. — This piece is set to music in the manner of the Italian Operas, and was performed at Covent Garden Theatre partly by English and partly by Italian singers. It met with good success during the run. Both the words and music are by that great composer, Dr. Thomas Arne. The words, however, were no more than a most wretched mangled translation of that excellent piece the "Artaserse" of the Abbé Metastasio, in which Dr. Arne has at least shown that however close an alliance poetry and music may have with each other, they are far from being constant companions, since in this performance the former is entirely as contemptible as the latter is inimitable.'—*Flying Post.*

'ARMINIUS,' Italian Opera, 1714.—Music

by Heidegger; dedicated to Lady Godolphin, and acted at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket.

'ARSINOE, QUEEN OF CYPRUS.' — An Opera after the Italian manner, by Clayton, performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1707.

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lent the author their assistance to ridicule Italian Opera.

'SEMELE,' Opera by William Congreve. —This musical piece was not performed during the lifetime of the author, but was afterwards set to music by Handel, and frequently played with applause at the Opera House, Haymarket, and Covent Garden Theatre.

SIR MICHAEL COSTA, by public opinion the first conductor of our day, an able composer and a musician seldom, if ever, excelled. This talented artist was born at Naples. He migrated to England at an early age to seek his fortune; in this case the fickle goddess favoured Michael Costa. By the exercise of ability and unflagging industry he won his reputation step by step, from playing in the orchestra of Her Majesty's Opera, as a violin, to be its chief. Birmingham had the honour of first recognising the young artist's talent. Costa

never forgot the kindness that he met with there; his first oratorio, 'Eli,' was given at their Town Hall, and he always presides at the Musical Festivals. When Costa joined the band of Her Majesty's Opera, he was a mere youth, although playing the first violin. Opportunity offered, and he was promoted to wield the bâton as conductor. This caused much dissatisfaction among the greybeards that had played in the orchestra many years, each fancying he ought to have been selected. Costa received a Lilliputian pair of toy razors, with a note addressed to 'the beardless boy,' ridiculing his promotion. When I withdrew from Her Majesty's Opera, I wrote to him expressing my regret at leaving him; he kindly replied as follows:—

'59, Eccleston-square, April 15, 1878.

'DEAR MR. STIRLING,

'I have received your letter, the contents of which have much disappointed

me. I am very sorry that you have withdrawn from the Opera, and no one more than myself will regret your absence,

'Believe me, dear Mr. Stirling,

'Sincerely yours,

'M. COSTA.'

END OF VOL. I.

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